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Dear Friend,
Most sincerely yours
L. M. Mason

THE LIFE OF
SAMUEL LOVER, R.H.A.,

*ARTISTIC, LITERARY, AND MUSICAL,
WITH SELECTIONS FROM HIS UNPUBLISHED PAPERS AND
CORRESPONDENCE.*

BY BAYLE BERNARD.

"And one man in his time plays many parts."

— As You Like It.

D. APPLETON & Co., NEW YORK.

1874.

THE LIFE OF

SAMUEL JOHNSON

BY JAMES JOHNSON

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IRISH SKETCHES.

	PAGE
Irish Bards and Irish Music	355
The Irish Brigade	362
Outlaws and Exiles	370
Bulls and Blunders	376
St. Patrick and the Serpent	380
The Dublin Fishwoman	384
Paddy and the Bear	387
The Irish Post-Boy	391
It's Mighty Improvin'	394
Dublin Porters, Carmen, and Waiters	396
Paddy at Sea	400

AMERICAN SKETCHES.

The Backwoodsman	417
Laurel Hill	422
New Year's Day in New York	427
Hotel Comforts (1846)	431
The Western Whig	435
Wood and its Uses	440
American Humour	444
Detroit and its Signs	449
The Atlantic Telegraph	451

POETRY.

The Lay of an Irish Minstrel	459
A Portrait	460
Lost Love	461
Love and Friendship	462
The Irish Mermaid	464
A Sea-Song	465
To Mary	466
Rejected Addresses	

POETRY (*Continued.*)

	PAGE
Half a Heart or the Whole	468
The Greenwood Tree	469
A Health	470
The Pibroch of Macgregor	471
The Old Year and the New	473
Art and Necessity	474
The Ex-Lover's Letter	476
Quill <i>versus</i> Steel	477
Matrimony	479
The Battle of Life	480
A Reverie	481
A Plea for Potheen	483
On certain Critics	484
Lines to a Lady	485
An Irish Melody Travestied	486
The Volunteer's Addition to "The Bowld Sojer Boy"	487
Translation from the French	489
Who are You? (in French and Italian)	490
Molly Carew (in English and Latin)	493
The Lay of the Loom and the Loam	497
LETTERS	519
INDEX	543

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CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	- xvii

CHAPTER I.

1797—1810.—Ireland— <i>Lover's</i> Birth and Family—A delicate Child with a good Mother—The Effect of her good Teaching—Disturbed time of his Infancy—His first Public Impressions—Marlborough Green and its Riding House—Beresford's Inquisition; its Floggings and its Sign-board—The true view of the Rebellion—The Grotesque that mingled with its Terrors—The Burning of Beresford's Bank-notes—Lieut. Hepenstal, the "Walking Gallows"—The Conduct of the English Soldiery—The Outrage on <i>Lover's</i> Home—His Impressions and his Patriotism— <i>Lover</i> , a Rebel at Sixteen—Music, the first of his gifts to stir itself—His early attempt at Execution—The Spell of Moore's Genius on <i>Lover</i> —Master Samuel's Education—A Dame School, and the Teacher's Prize Marks—A Boy's Academy and Overwork— <i>Lover's</i> Visit to the Country—His enfeebling Sensibility—Loss of his Mother and its effect—Nature his Consoler, and, at her hands, his speedy invigoration—Other uses of his Visit—Its Influence on the coming Artist—Painting, his second gift to develop, and the most important in the future—Probable unfolding of his sense of Colour—Another effect of this Visit—His first Acquaintance with the Peasantry—Rural Pleasures as well as Uses—Country Labours sustained by Song—The Ploughman's Air to his Cattle—Seed-time and Harvest—Pleasures nearer Home—The Farmer and the Wild Duck—A Proof of Reinvigoration, Master Samuel and the Ghost	- I
---	-----

CHAPTER II.

PAGE

1810—1818.—Restored Health and Return to Dublin—	
—His Gaiety and Enjoyment—His Contact with the Dublin Populace	
—Characteristics of their Humour—Specimens—History of Dublin	
connected with his own—Picture of the City at Three Periods—	
Belligerent and Uproarious—The Liberty and Ormond Quay Boys—	
Their Contests and Excesses—The Trinity College Students, the great	
Patrons of the Drama—The Immunities of the College Court—The	
Debtor and the Pump—The Bucks of Dublin—Pinkindindies—	
Sweaters—Chalkers—Buck English and Buck Sheehy, &c.—Dublin's	
second and fortunate Period—Improved Society and Manners—Its	
Senate and its Stage—Its Decline and lavish Extravagance—The	
Reign of reckless Dissipation—Coaches and Six on the Grand Drive,	
&c.—A Third Picture of Dublin—Its Bankruptcy and Gloom—Effect	
of the Rebellion—Effect of the Union—Absenteeism—Increased Tax-	
ation—Decay of Trade—Their Influence on the future of Lover—He	
begins Life as a Stockbroker—His unfitness for Business yet love of	
Work—The Outbreak of his Talents—His Father's Terror and	
Endeavours at Repression—The Conflict and its Climax—Lover's	
Resolve to quit his Home and become a Painter—The Difficulties of	
the Attempt—His want of Money, want of a Market, and also want	
of Art—Nevertheless his courageous Venture—Its Sustainment and	
Result - - - - -	17

CHAPTER III.

1815—1818.—Lover's Outset in Life—Its Date—His three years' Study	
as an Artist—Its Mystery—How he Worked and how he Lived—	
Alleviation of his Labours—Lady Morgan's Comment on his History	
—His <i>début</i> in Dublin as a Painter—Sketch of Irish Art—Its want of	
Antiquity, and why—Its Attachment to a Capital—More Imperial	
than Patriotic—Dublin Architecture chiefly English—Irish nevertheless	
in Spirit—Trinity College, the Custom House, the Royal Exchange,	
&c.—Irish Sculpture—The Merits of Smythe and Hogan—The "Ino	
and Bacchus" of Foley—Macdowell's "Eve," &c.—Irish Music—Its	
strange Deficiency—Its Glory connected with her Bards—Ireland has	
no great modern Musical Genius—Balfe, Rooke, and Vincent Wallace,	
Founders of the Romantic English Opera—Irish Painters: their	
Variety—Jervas, the friend of Pope—Barrett, one of the Founders of the	
Royal Academy—Barry, the <i>protégé</i> of Burke—Modern Artists: Sir	

Martin Archer Shee, Mulready, Danby, Maclise, O'Neil, Nicol, &c.	
—Irish Miniature Painters : Robertson, O'Reilly, Comerford—Irish Art Institutions : The Dublin Society, the Royal Hibernian Academy, &c.	
—Revival of Dublin's Prosperity—Return of distinguished Society, and Renewal of a Tribunal of Taste—Lover's outset as a Marine Painter—First attractions of Water-colour—His admiration of the Irish skies—His Studies of their Traits and Changes—His gradual Preference for Miniature—Its Popularity in Ireland—Its Extinction by Photography—Its Contrasts to the latter—Contrast of Miniature and Portrait—Miniature, the favourite of the Emotions—Formerly an addition to Irish dress—Comerford, its ablest Painter—His Refinement and technical Excellence—Lover's Merits by his side—His marked Individuality—His Vivacity and Gaiety—His advance to Grace and Sentiment—His second and more important stage, that of Dignity and Elevation—His Paganini Picture, &c.—Lover's Success in Miniature a striking proof of his love of Art	41

CHAPTER IV.

1818—1825.—The growth of Lover's other Talents—His *début* in Literature—The "Gridiron," his earliest Comic Story—The "Moore Banquet"—His First Appearance as a Song-Writer—His Song, "The Poet's Election;" its Origin; its Lines on Southey—Lover's Success in Private Society—The Great Favourite of his Time—His Social Talents and Characteristics—His Popularity in England—The Irish Life of the Past Century a Phenomenon in Modern History—Its Mingled Refinement and Barbarity—Its Feudal Sentiment and Humour—The Model Landlord of the time; his Carnival Existence; his Duelling and Drinking—Dublin the Centre of this peculiar Life—Its Mirth and Eccentricity—Buck Whalley and his Famous Wager—Beauchamp Bagenal, and his Mad Adventures—Its Affairs of Honour and Convivial Excesses—The Darker Features of the Period—The Abduction Clubs, and their Cruelties—The Career of Higgins, the "Sham Squire," Felon, and Magistrate, a Romance of Rascality—The Offset to these Features—Exemplary Landlords and Refined Society—Lord Cloncurry's Eulogy—Distinctions of Irish and Parisian Circles—Humour and Sympathy of the Former—Also Higher Moral Tone—Estimation of Women, &c.—Dublin Life in the time of Lover—Its Soberer Character and Improvement—Its increased Taste and Intelligence—Its Elegant Circles—The Lefanus, &c.—Its Surviving Eccen-

tricity—Jones the Sculptor—Butler the Architect—Brophy the Dentist—His Capital Stories—Anecdote of the Marquis of Wellesley—Butler's Paganini—Jones's "Love, Farewell"—Dublin Literary Eccentrics—Richard Shiel and his Recitations—Lady Morgan—Maturin—His Plays and Romances—Strange Habits and Forgetfulness—His Retort on a Practical Joker	- - - - -	64
---	-----------	----

CHAPTER V.

1825—1827.—Lover's Merits as a Song-Writer—Characteristics of his Genius—History and Nationality of Songs—Their Uses, personal and public—Position of the Song-Writer—A Burns, a Moore, &c.—Lover's Place amidst Modern Minstrels—Like Moore, a "Songster of Society"—His Lyrics of Irish Peasant Life—Their Aim; to vindicate the Peasant, and conciliate English sympathy—The Lyric Literature of Ireland—Its Marked Peculiarities—Prolonged Use of the Native Tongue—Deficiency of Ballads—Their Earliest Specimens—Tickell's *Colin and Lucy*, &c.—Parnell and Goldsmith—Modern Anglo-Irish Writers—The True Authors of the Irish Ballad: Griffin, Calanan, &c.—Ferguson's "Forging of the Anchor"—The Songs of Ireland all National—Originating with the Bards—Their few Remains—Carolan, the Irish Anacreon; the last true Bard of Ireland—His Successors, the Hedge Schoolmasters—Owen Roe O'Sullivan, &c.—The classes of Irish Songs, and the proportion found in the Gaelic—The old Irish Peasants' Love Song, *Molly Astore*, &c.—Carolan's Songs of Society, *Gracey Nugent*, &c.—The Bacchanalian Lyrics—Their wild Festivity, Carolan's especially—His *Planxty Stafford*, *Planxty Peyton*, &c.—Explanation of their Ardour—The Jacobite Songs of Ireland—Their Contrast to those of the Scotch—The *Fair Hills of Ireland*, the *Shane Bui*, &c.—The Orange Songs of Ireland—Earliest Specimen—*Lilliburlero*, its vulgar Doggerel, yet reputed Influence—Better Specimens eventually—Col. Blacker's *Battle of the Boyne*—Lyrics of the Volunteer Movement—Lysaght's *Our Island* and Eulogy on Grattan—Songs of the Insurrection—Dr. Drennan's *When Erin first rose*—Moore's Melodies—An Epoch in the National Minstrelsy—Their Characteristics—The True Song-Writers of Ireland: Griffin, Davis, Calanan, Waller, Lover, &c.—Their Power and their Variety—Deficiencies in Irish Song—Nothing Pastoral, little Sporting, and nothing Military or Naval—The *Boatman's Hymn*—The Comic Song of Ireland the youngest of its progeny, and why—Earliest Specimens

in the Last Century : *Garry Owen* and the *Rakes of Mallow*, the *Sprig of Shillelagh*, *The Boys of Kilkenny*, &c.—English Counterfeits and Caricatures—Irish Humour owing to Irish Drink—Pat, a Reprobate or Savage—The Slang Songs of Ireland—*Lover's* disgust at the popular Favourites, and resolve to neutralize their Influence—His prompter, Lady Morgan—*Rory O'More*, the establishment of a new School of Comic Love Song—Its Great Success in union with its Air—A previous *Rory O'More* indited by Dr. Drennan—*Lover's* group of Comic Love Songs Hibernian to the core, and the true basis of his Lyric fame—Their probable fulfilment of his Aim—Specimens of their Humour and Feeling : *Molly Carew*, *The Widow Machree*, *Live in My Heart and Pay no Rent*, *Kitty Maclure*, &c. - - - 87

CHAPTER VI.

1827—1832.—*Lover's* Marriage—Its Happy Character—His First Love—Its Advantages—His Commonplace Book—Its Contents—A Sarcasm of Curran's—A Joke of Chief Justice Bushe—The Good Memory of Sir Walter Scott—The Literary Ambition of General Wolfe, &c.—Club Life in Dublin—The Burschenschaft—Charles Lever—The Glee Club and its Patrons—Anecdote of some of its Members : T. Cooke, Alexander Lee, Rophino Lacey, M. W. Balfe—The latter's Humour—*Lover's* first Drama—*The Graunweal*.—1828. His Secretaryship to the Royal Hibernian Academy—Its limited Fame.—1830. Development of a new Talent—*Lover* as a Caricaturist—The Tithe System of Ireland attacked with Satire—The *Irish Horn Book*—Its Editor, "Jonathan Buckthorne"—Its Illustrator, Samuel *Lover*—Character and Force of his Illustrations.—1832. Collected issue of his Tales and Legends—Arrival in Dublin of Paganini—His Celebrity and his Appearance—*Lover's* Miniature of the great Violinist—His Conversational Talent—Its effect on Paganini—Aspersions on the great Musician, his Penuriousness, &c., rebutted—His well-known Generosity to Hector Berlioz—His Devotion to his Son—His Confession upon the point—Tribute to his Genius by the Musician Mori - - - 116

CHAPTER VII.

1833—1836.—The Paganini Miniature at the Royal Academy Exhibition—Miniature Painting in England—Its great Exemplars, Sir William

Ross and Mr. Thorburn—Caricatures of Paganini—A Violinist painted in Character—Personal Attacks and Exaggerations—Nature <i>versus</i> Popular Fancy—Estimate of the Miniature—Eulogy on its Violin by Wilkie, Chantrey, and Sir Martin Archer Shee— Lover's resolve to remove to London—Proposed Miniature of the Princess Victoria—A trying Disappointment—Lover <i>versus</i> Hayter—Lover's activity in London—His introductions to Society—Malibran and "The Loan of a Gridiron"—Sydney Smith and "Rory O'More"—Lover's greater popularity as a Song-writer and Composer—Comparison of Painting with Poetry and Music—Greater attraction of the latter—Madame Vestris the introducer of his new Songs to the Public—Poetic standard of a Lyric—Specimens of the new Series: <i>What will you do, Love? Call in vain, Cupid's First Dip—The Songs of the Superstitions—What's in a name?</i> - - - - -	136
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII.

1836—1838.—Lover's Merits as a Novelist—Preliminary Survey of Irish Fiction—Its two Classes: Romantic and National—The Sentimental Romance of Lady Morgan: *St. Clair, Ida of Athens, &c.*—The Historical of Grattan and Croly: *The Heiress of Bruges, Salathiel, &c.*—The Purely Imaginative of Maturin: *The Fatal Revenge, Melmoth, &c.*—Distinctions of the National Character—Miss Edgeworth its first Illustrator—Her Deficiency—The old Irish Gentry: their intensity—The Protestant Gentry: their Comic Romance—Lady Morgan the Founder of the National Fiction—The Irish Peasant—His Intensity unbroken by his Sufferings—His Vindictiveness and Misery—Griffin, Banim, and Carleton his Vindicators—Banim's object, Catholic Relief—Lover's object as a Tale-writer identical with that of his Songs—The Peculiarity of Irish Fiction—Its Novels belong to the higher classes, its Romances to the lower—As a whole, a Mirror of the Past—The Novelists of Ireland—Miss Edgeworth the least National—Her Merits and Defects—The Painter of the Upper Classes only—Deficient in the native Temperament, the Key to the National Character—Her Anglo-Irish Stories: *Ennui, The Absentee, &c.*—Her Failure to sketch the Peasant—*Castle Rackrent* and *Rosanna—Ormond*, her best work, and its admirable "King Corney"—The true Basis of her Fame: *Belinda, Patronage, &c.*—Lady Morgan a great Contrast—Her true Irish Temperament, with all its Merits and its Failings—A supposed Irish De Staël—Her Excellence as a Novelist—Her *O'Donnell*

and <i>Florence Macarthy</i> : their Character Painting; their Dialogue; their Fashionable and Middle Life; their Peasantry, Macrory, O'Leary, Shane, &c.—Her Comic Invention: the Mock Trial and the "Jug-Day"—Her Political and Party Warfare—Her chief Adversary, J. W. Croker—Alleged Causes of his Enmity—Her ultimate Revenges—Her Witticism on Croker—Charles Lever the Last true Irish Novelist—His two Classes of Stories, the Effervescent and the Observant—His Comic Romances—The Irish Smollett—His Second Class of Stories, Tales of the Decay of Landed Families: <i>The Knight of Gwynne</i> , <i>The Martins of Cro Martin</i> , &c.—Their Gallery of Portraits—Their Wit, Thought, and Observation—Their striking Dramatic Scenes—Charles Maturin's one Novel, <i>Woman, or Pour et Contre</i> —Its Subject, Power, and Painfulness	- - - - - 155
---	---------------

CHAPTER IX.

1836—1838.—Irish Fiction continued—National Romance Writers—Gerald Griffin—His superior Genius—His Romance of Life—His Dramatic Power—Ireland's Dramatic Eminence—State of the London Stage—Griffin's *Gisippus*—Mr. Macready—Irish Actors—English Fiction—The Minerva Press—Griffin's impulse to National Romance Writing—His Sphere the Middle Classes—His first attempt, *Holland Tide*—Its Characteristics, Humour, Moral Sympathy, &c.—*The Collegians* his Crowning Effort—Its Variety and Art—Conception of its Hero—His Crime and his Remorse—Its Incidents: The Stageen Race, &c.—Its Characters: Mrs. Cregan, Eily O'Connor, Hyland Creagh, &c.—Rapidity of its Production—John Banim and the Romance of the Peasantry—His sterner and intenser Genius, *The O'Hara Tales*—Their Popularity—The Misery of the Irish Peasantry—Banim's Pathos—*The Nolans* and *Peter of the Castle*—Michael Banim John's Associate—*Crohoore of the Bill-hook*, &c.—Banim's best Work *The Conformist*, an Illustration of the Penal Code—William Carleton the greatest Painter of the Peasant—The Prose Burns of Ireland—His *Traits and Stories*—The Ulster Creaghts—Carleton's Character Painting: Sally Macgowan, Parra Sashta, Hycey Burke, &c.—His Pathos—*Fardarougha* his greatest conception—*Val M'Clutchy*, *Emigrants of Ardara*, &c.—*Black Prophet*, a Tale of the Famine—His *Clarionet*, an Irish *Paul and Virginia*—Samuel Lover—Aim of his Stories—Distinctions of his Humour—Its Refinement in his Songs—Its Robustness in his Stories—His *Legends and Stories*—Their Popularity—Their Mode of

treating Fairy Mythology—King O'Toole and Little Fairly—"The Gridiron"—Kishogue, Barney O'Reardon, &c.—His Novels—*Rory O'More*—Rory the Ideal of the Irish Peasant—His *Handy Andy*, Prince of Blunderers—Its Characters: O'Grady, Murtoch Murphy, &c.—Its Incidents—Lover's Effect on his Contemporaries, Bianconi and Miss Edgeworth—Charles Young his "Special Public" - - - 180

CHAPTER X.

1836—1846.—Lover's Settlement in London—Notice of him in "Blackwood"—His Reception in English Society—His want of Egotism—His Social Inspirations—Wits of Society, and Humorists—Lover's Pleasantry: two Instances—Lover's Labours as a Dramatist—The *Olympic Picnic*, a Christmas Novelty—*The Beau Ideal* and *Liston—Rory O'More* and Tyrone Power—His Operettas and other Pieces—The Value of his Irish Dramas—Power his best Interpreter—The Merits of the latter as an Actor—His Literary Talent and his Humour—His Rejoinder to Charles Kean—Lover's further labours as a Painter—Portrait of the Moulvie Ishmael Khan—Of Lord Brougham as Lord Chancellor—David Roberts' comment on his Nose—Portrait of Thalberg, the Pianist—His admiration of Lover's Music—A Portrait Painter's Drudgery—Lover's Likenesses of Children—His Miniature of Russell Moore, the son of the Poet—His Etching a new Talent—Its Cost—His weakened Sight, and Abandonment of Painting—The Rise of Photography and End of Miniatures—Lover least known as an Artist—Why?—Private Life of Miniatures in comparison with Oil Paintings—Lover's Literary and Social Life—Connection with "Bentley's Miscellany" and the "Dublin University Magazine"—The Dinner to him at Grillon's—Friendly Assemblies under his own Roof—Mrs. Jameson—Miss Landon—Tom Campbell—Charles Young—David Roberts—Dr. Croly—Father Prout—Ingoldsby Barham—Douglas Jerrold—The Latter's Witticisms on Albert Smith, George Robins, etc. - - - - - 210

CHAPTER XI.

1836—1846.—Lover's Merits as a Composer—A Writer of Melodies—Their Importance—The Testimony of Haydn and Rossini—The National Melodies of Europe—The Celtic and the Gothic—The Mourn-

fulness of those of Ireland attributable to its History—	
Lover commences as an adapter—His Original Compositions—	
Their Variety <i>Under the Rose, The Land of Dreams</i> , etc.—	
Their Simplicity of Structure—His Words and Music simultaneous—	
Co-exertion of Three Talents—The True Nature of the Song-Writer—	
The Descendant of the Bards, who combined Verse and Music—	
Modern Songs ordinarily Poems—The Real Song-Writers of Modern Times :	
Béranger, Burns, Dibdin, Moore, and Lover—	
Three of these Composers—All Adapters of Native Airs—	
Lady Morgan the Earliest Adapter of the Irish—	
The Mechanism of Song-Writing—Lover's Comments on the Subject—	
The Greatest Poets not always the Best Song-Writers—	
Moore and Burns the Great Exemplars—Perfection of Moore's Words—	
Burns' Musical Sympathy—Béranger as a Song Adapter—	
Lover's New Venture with the Public—	
An Irish Entertainment—His Precedents—	
Samuel Foote and his "Tea Parties"—Charles Dibdin with his Songs and	
Stories—George Steven's Lecture on Heads—The Elder Matthews and	
his "At Homes"—Intended <i>Début</i> of Thomas Moore—Lover's <i>Début</i>	
and his Success—The Elegance of his Entertainments—	
Profitable Tour and invigorated Health—Resolve to Visit America, the <i>El Dorado</i>	
of the Artist—The Tide of Emigration—Characteristic Stories of the	
Time - - - - -	230

CHAPTER XII.

1846, 1847.—*Visit to America*—Its Threefold Object : Songs, Sketches, and a Book—Arrival in New York—Washington Irving, N. P. Willis, Bryant the Poet, &c.—Climate of America—The Great Heat—Transitions—Dryness cause of premature Decay—Obstacle to Drawing—The Highlands of the Hudson—New York—The "Empire City"—Its French Aspect—Boulevards—Awnings—Post Advertisements—Its Pavements—Its Mosquitoes the *Douaniers* of the Western Coast—Boston and its English Aspect—Its Anglo-Saxon Faces sharpened by a Rigorous Climate—The Athens of the Union—Emerson, Longfellow, &c.—The Poet's House—Washington's Head-quarters—Visit to Plymouth Rock—National Glory and Local Enterprise—Lover's *Début* at Boston—Its Cold Audience—His Surprise—English Reserve Intensified by Climate—The New Englander of the Streets an Englishman Indoors—New England Humour an offset to its Temperament—Its Characteristics—First Importers : Matthews, Hackett, and Sam Slick—Old as the Pedlar of the Colonies—A Universal Genius—His

Sharp Practice and Inventions : Horn Gun-flints and Wooden Nutmegs
 —His Munchausenisms—"Force of Imagination"—The Indian Summer—
 Lover's Lyric—New Haven and the "Judge's Cave"—Tradition of the Three Regicides—
 Death of Mrs. Lover—Departure for the South—Philadelphia the Quaker City—
 Baltimore in the State of Merryland—Washington an Architectural Anti-Climax—Its Capitol—
 Its Poetic Aspect—Winter in America—Its Severity and its Offsets—
 Skating—Recollections of the Hudson—Its Sleighing and its various uses—
 Lover's View of it Matrimonially—His Song *Slaying the Deer*

- 249

CHAPTER XIII.

1847, 1848.—The South—Richmond—Southern Society—The Aristocracy of the West—
 Their Visitor and Critic—Contrast of Virginians and Carolinians—Testimony to the latter by Achille Murat—The Black Features of the South—The Negroes—Their Stupidity—A Waiter's aids to Sleep—
 Specimens of Negro Humour—The Irish antipathy to Negroes—A Darwinian Justification—
 Travelling in the South—Cars and Taverns—City Hotels—Their old Colonial uses—
 Insecurity—Considerate Landlords—"Revolvers to be had at the Bar"—Southern Habits—
 Horsemanship—Old Sayings as to the Carolinians—Southern Vegetation—Savannah—
 Its Shade and Ventilation—Its Woods—Their "Cathedral Aisles" and "Cobwebs"—
 Journey to the West—The Old American Stage-coach—The "Corduroy Road"—
 Condition of Travellers who ride over it—Improvement on Byron's Lines in *The Corsair*—
 Macon and its Indian Reminiscences—Embarking on the Alabama—Its noble flow—
 The Song it prompted—Arrival at New Orleans, the "New York of the South"—
 Its French Origin and Aspect—Its Cathedral and its Levee—Contrasts of New Orleans—
 Its Summer Solitude—Its Winter Gaiety—Its Wealth and Growth—Its Foundation—
 A City built on a Raft—The old French Citizen of New Orleans—Loss of Vivacity by Residence—
 Their Plantations in Louisiana unchanged since their first Settlement—Pleasant Features of Creole Life—
 Its Shadows—The Creole Girls born to dishonour—Sketching at New Orleans, and Song-Writing—
 The Alabama—Henry Clay's Eulogium—Sail up the Mississippi—Its Grandeur and its Monotony—
 Drinking and Gambling in its Steamboats—The River an unsuspected Revolutionist—
 Its low Banks—Variety of Climate, &c.—Memphis—Lover's Apostrophe—The Region of the

Future worshipping the Past—The Inundations—Their Sublime Effect—A Domestic Incident—The Dove-cot—The Ohio and its Contrasts—Old Kentuckian Character and Humour	273
--	-----

CHAPTER XIV.

1847, 1848.—Canada—Niagara—Difficulty of Describing it—The Sense it gives of the Infinite—Lover's Impressions on seeing it—His Sketches of the Falls—Difficulty of Drawing them—N. P. Willis's Illustration, and Byron's in "Childe Harold"—Our Age of Science—Niagara Weighed and Measured—An Index to Cosmogony—Our Age of Sensation—Niagara Burlesqued and Utilized—The Boat and its Load of Victims—Sam Patch and his Three Leaps, etc.—The Lake of a Thousand Islands—Its Beauty and Tranquillity—Its Romance of the Rebellion—The "Queen of the Thousand Islands"—The St. Lawrence—Various Estimates of it—Its Human History—An Irish Account of the Battle of Prescott—Descent of the Rapids—Force and Danger of the Current—The Longue Sault and the Grand Rush—Advantages of Steam—Its old Conveyance, a Canadian Bateau, suggesting the Wild Horse of Mazeppa—Montreal and its Surroundings—Sail down the St. Lawrence—Its Animation—Varied Life upon its Banks—Its old French Settlements—Christianized Indians—Quebec—Its Towering Position—Attractions of its Neighbourhood—The Falls of Montmorenci—Indian Village of Loretto—Effect of Cold on the French Character—The Pent-up "Habitan" another Laplander—His Seigneur an Arrogant Recluse—The Down Easter and the "Habitan"—Lake George and Trenton Falls—A Second Visit to New England—The Fogs upon the Coast—Effect upon the Town of Portland; also upon its Seamen—Story of a Nantucket Skipper—New York in the Winter—New Year's Day—The Sleighing—The Horses' Funeral Peals—Social Characteristics—The Ferry Boat and its Initials—The Philosophy of Accidents—The Purity of English Speech—American Sympathy with Irish Suffering—The Excursion to the Great Lakes—The Route by the Juniata—Its Penalty—The Canal Boat—Detroit, on Lake St. Clair—Its Love of Music, and its Signboards—Lover's Discovery of his Great Mistake—No Scenery about the Lakes except round Sault De Marie—Bad Weather and Discomforts—The Red Man of the Lakes—The Grounding of the Steamer—The Story of a Bouquet—Niagara Revisited—Departure for New York and England—The Character of the American Visit—Lover's highest Compliment	294
---	-----

CHAPTER XV.

PAGE

1848—1868.—England—	1848
Lover's new Entertainment—	
Death of his elder	
Daughter—His second Marriage—	
Cessation of his Entertainments, and	
Settlement near London—His new and leading Occupation, Land-	
scape Painting in Oil—Its Difficulties as compared with Water Colour	
—His greater Mistake in not adopting Figure Painting—His other	
Occupations, Entertainments for Vocalists and Musical Dramas—The	
<i>Sentinel of the Alma</i> and <i>Macarthy More</i> —Libretti of Operas for Balfe	
—Constituents of a Libretto Writer—The Dramatic Element his	
greatest—Opera History an Illustration—The Classic and Romantic	
Eras—Eugène Scribe the greatest Librettist—Lover's last Dramatic	
Effort—The Queen's Bounty.—1856. Lover as Editor and Critic—The	
<i>Lyrics of Ireland</i> .—1858. Wanting in the Songs of Moore: Additions	
from Swift, Goldsmith, and Sheridan—What constitutes an Irish Lyric,	
Authorship or Nationality?—Reasons in favour of the Latter—Merits	
of Lover's Additions and of his Labours as an Editor—Two cases of	
Disputed Authorship, <i>Savourneen Deelish</i> and <i>The Exile of Erin</i> —	
Lady Morgan the Author of the former, and the claim of G. N.	
Reynolds in respect to the latter.—1859. The Burns Festival—Its	
general Celebration—Prize Poem proposed by the Crystal Palace	
Company—Lover's Satire, <i>Rival Rhymes</i> , in the manner of the <i>Rejected</i>	
<i>Addresses</i> —Advantages possessed by the Writers of the latter—Lover's	
Mistakes in his Title and Pseudonyme—Merits of his Satires—Imitation	
of Campbell; also of Father Prout—Travesties of Milton, Longfellow,	
and Macaulay—Merit also of the Prose Pieces—Tupper, Thackeray,	
and Brougham.—1859. Rise of the Volunteer Movement—Lover	
a Volunteer—Labours on Finance Committee and at Drill—His	
Service to the Movement by his Songs—His Country Life and	
Established Health—His Surrender of London Society.—1864. The	
sudden Failure of his Health—Necessity for a Milder Climate—Trial	
of the Isle of Wight and Jersey—Lover's closing Days—His Suffering	
and Regrets—His Sustainment under his Affliction—His Patience,	
Cheerfulness, and Pleasantry—His renewed Labours and occasional	
Enjoyments—His Amiability and extraordinary Strength.—1868. His	
last Anniversaries of Marriage-day and Birthday—His last Illness and	
Death—His Burial at Kensal Green—The Tablet to his Memory put	
up in St. Patrick's Cathedral	319

INTRODUCTION.

POET, novelist, dramatist, painter, etcher, and composer!—it is with this long array of titles, this evidence so rarely met with of a manifold capacity, that we recall the name of Samuel Lover. We cannot look back at the place he occupied for more than a quarter of century without being struck with the fact that, in an age of speciality, he was one of its most notable exceptions. His variety of gift became, practically, the directest challenge to that division of labour principle which forms the law of modern excellence.

Nor does it greatly lessen the impression of such a phenomenon as this, that the power he displayed was not on a par with his variety. Genius, of course, as we regard it ordinarily, implies concentration. It is the degree in which the mind can collect and expand its creative faculty in any one direction. Even the prodigy of a Leonardo, which could sweep without a parallel over such an area of art and science, centered its productive

force in painting. But genius can also be diffusive—it can be shown in various natural aptitudes developed and exercised together, which, if not remarkable individually, are still extraordinary as a whole. Power may diminish with diversity, but it is a phenomenon, after all, that only divides in its particulars to reunite in its sum. Such was the case with Lover.

Not less notable, however, than the best of his endowments—and certainly not less important as a principal source of his success—was his unflagging application. He was not only one of the cleverest and most vivacious men of his time, but he was also one of the most laborious. The great moral of his life—next to that strong sense of self-reliance which led him, whilst still a boy, to exert his talents at all hazards—was his ready surrender of indulgence and patient submission to detail, as the only means which could convert a gift into either a gain or a distinction. It is true he was so happily constituted that he could make his various faculties serve as reliefs to one another. He could pass from the easel to the piano, and from the etching-tool to the pen, and renew his vigour with as much certainty as he could awaken his invention.

This was, of course, an extraordinary privilege ; but he was possessed of other qualities which, if less surprising, were quite as positive, and quite as entitled to remembrance. He was not one who gained our admiration at the cost of our respect. Genius, in his case, was not

called upon to supply the cloak of charity. His life was pure and honourable, and the talents that adorned it were but the embroidery on a substance that was in itself sound and enduring.

I have thought that such a man, so variously gifted, so truly estimable, and so invariably successful, who for more than thirty years was almost as great a favourite with the public, as he was with all refined society, should not be allowed to pass away without some record being traced of his diversified career—a career which, if uneventful, was always resolute and fruitful, and, in one respect at least, cannot be considered uninformative. I was, moreover, of opinion that the general impression in regard to Lover had scarcely done him justice. I could not but feel that, so far from gaining, he had rather suffered by a diversity which, diffusing public attention over a wide group of particulars, had necessarily placed some of them in a less distinct light than others.

I was anxious therefore that his claims should be severally and candidly considered, and, in order to the more exactness, that in each of the arts he exercised, it should be shown in what relation he stood to the best of his contemporaries—an end, I may remark, which would further have the advantage of placing Irish art and literature, and also Irish life and society, with which he was so much connected, in a clearer and compacter view than had yet been given to the world.

In discharging such a task, I need not say I saw

the importance of allowing Lover to speak for himself. I certainly thought that, with his fervid temperament and strong personal attachments, he must have been a great letter-writer in his time, and have made many interesting references, both to his own history and exertions, and the world he so largely mixed with, which the public would like to know—but in all this, it seems, I was mistaken. After much inquiry in various directions, and on both sides of the Channel, I could not find he had left behind him any such records of his experience. Death, it is true, had been recently busy with some of his most intimate and valued friends, but from the most eminent of their survivors—Charles Dickens, Mr. Harrison Ainsworth, Mr. Charles Lever, and many others—I could obtain no aid in this particular. The only letters in the hands of his family were a few addressed to friends in Ireland, and others written to his children whilst he was absent in America—and of these, whenever practicable, I was only too happy to avail myself.

Such literary reserve on the part of an ardent, sympathetic man is certainly something remarkable, and could scarcely be credited, but that it seems he was equally reticent at home—his daughter, in her brief sketch of him, saying he was “little given to talking of himself,” and that even she “knew but little of his history, save in the period when she was near him.”

Letters, however, were not my only loss. I could not find that he had left behind him—with one slight

exception only—any papers or notes of any kind that would be of service to his biographer,—anything anecdotal or critical in respect to his labours, literary or artistic,—any details of his contemporaries, or recollections of society. His journals, which were not commenced till 1838, are simply composed, till he reaches America, of domestic memoranda. It was only in the last year of his existence that he thought of writing his reminiscences—and these are limited, unhappily, to the brief period of his childhood. But for this attempt he would seem to have felt that the best story of his life was comprised in his productions, and that they, after all, formed his most appropriate memorial.

All that it was in the power, therefore, of Mrs. Lover kindly to place at my disposal when I commenced my undertaking was a lively sketch of her husband's career up to 1850, from the *Dublin University Magazine*, written by Mr. J. Deane—another sketch by her daughter-in-law, which enlarges on the former, with some new facts and particulars—the interesting fragment named above, and the journals I have just referred to. However these may be regarded as forming a foundation for my labours, it is obvious they required considerable addition and connection to give them the substance and interest which a biography demands, and that these were only to be supplied by some one who, in the first place, was tolerably familiar with Lover's history, and in the next had some little sympathy with the leading arts that he professed.

Making no pretension in the latter respect, beyond the power of suggesting to the reader a general conception of the claims maintained, and the standards they were tried by, I may be allowed perhaps to mention the two or three favouring circumstances which have given me advantages in discharging such a task. Intimate with Lover for several years from the period of his first arrival in London, I have also long been attracted to those fields of song and story with which his name is so well associated; whilst, lastly, born in America—where I had travelled in my youth—I was able to enlarge from my own memory many of his necessarily hasty jottings upon Western scenery and cities.

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LIFE OF SAMUEL LOVER,
ARTISTIC, LITERARY, AND MUSICAL.

THE LIFE OF SAMUEL LOVER.

CHAPTER I.

1797—1810.—Ireland—Lover's Birth and Family—A delicate Child with a good Mother—The Effect of her good Teaching—Disturbed time of his Infancy—His first Public Impressions—Marlborough Green and its Riding House—Beresford's Inquisition; its Floggings and its Signboard—The true view of the Rebellion—The Grotesque that mingled with its Terrors—The Burning of Beresford's Bank-notes—Lieut. Hepenstal, the "Walking Gallows"—The Conduct of the English Soldiery—The Outrage on Lover's Home—His Impressions and his Patriotism—Lover, a Rebel at Sixteen—Music, the first of his gifts to stir itself—His early attempt at Execution—The Spell of Moore's Genius on Lover—Master Samuel's Education—A Dame School, and the Teacher's Prize Marks—A Boy's Academy and Overwork—Lover's Visit to the Country—His enfeebling Sensibility—Loss of his Mother and its effect—Nature his Consoler, and, at her hands, his speedy invigoration—Other uses of his Visit—Its Influence on the coming Artist—Painting, his second gift to develop, and the most important in the future—Probable Unfolding of his sense of Colour—Another effect of this Visit—His first Acquaintance with the Peasantry—Rural Pleasures as well as Uses—Country Labours sustained by Song—The Ploughman's Air to his Cattle—Seed-time and Harvest—Pleasures nearer Home—The Farmer and the Wild Duck—A Proof of Re-invigoration, Master Samuel and the Ghost.

SAMUEL LOVER was born in Dublin on the 24th of February, 1797. He was the eldest son of a man of business, a well-known member of the Stock Exchange, whose character was much respected, and whose circumstances

were tolerably prosperous. What was the history of his family beyond the fact that it was always Protestant, I have not been able to discover. I am inclined to think, however, that it was originally English, and had invariably been connected with the commercial middle-class, since, if it ever could have boasted of any alliance with the aristocracy, the Hibernian pride of blood could scarcely have kept the matter secret. It is probable if Lover himself had ever been appealed to on the point he would have claimed for his progenitors a very venerable origin; he would have said—the family of the Lovers was as old as the days of Eden.

Although destined to grow up a robust and active man, he was a delicate and sensitive child, who required the most careful treatment both in respect to mind and body. He was also for a time the only offspring of his parents, his brothers and sisters who immediately followed him all dying in their infancy. Thus, if he escaped the evil of neglect, he was exposed to what is generally a much worse one—over-indulgence, which, as far as his father was concerned, a man engaged all day in business, was certainly more likely to have been prompted than controlled. It was his privilege, however, to possess—

“Life’s first good—a good mother,”

a tender, patient, thoughtful woman, who watched over him with a love that was as judicious as it was gentle, and who, as that love narrowed to himself, grew only

more conscious of her duty. Under her benignant influence his nature received its proper moulding, and the germs were fostered of that moral sense which his after life developed, whilst it is pleasant to see how ardently all her affection was returned, and he looked back to their separation, which occurred in his twelfth year, as the first misfortune of his life.

Of the effect of her excellent teaching he gives a touching instance in the fragment of his "Reminiscences," which, as I have said already, were unhappily only extended to his childhood. On his way to school one morning, when a very little fellow, he was tempted to buy a sailing boat from a boy who was a stranger to him, and who very kindly, as he considered, offered to take charge of his tiny purchase till he came back from his tasks. On his return from school, however, the trusted youth was not to be seen, but, though surprised, he was not suspicious, and on relating the matter to his parents felt quite certain he should meet with his new acquaintance the next morning. But that morning and many others failed to afford this satisfaction, and at length the truth came out—the boy was a rogue, and he had been robbed. Upon this Lover remarks, "This disclosure was something new to me. I had never known till now an instance of bad faith. I had been taught by my dear mother to detest a lie, and keep my word, and I believed that this good practice universally prevailed, and bitter indeed to me was the fruit of this small branch of

my tree of knowledge." Bitter indeed the disenchantment; but we cannot the less respect the heart that cherished such a faith, or the teaching that gave rise to it.

Lover, however, had further reason to be thankful for such a mother. She proved to be not only the guide and consoler of his childhood, but, in a very important way, its shield. His infancy lay in a period of great political disturbance,—that of the Irish insurrections. He was born on the eve of one rebellion, and was only six years old at the outbreak of another,—the abortive attempt of Robert Emmett. Rarely indeed has a humorist made his appearance in the world under less congenial circumstances. Consequently all his public impressions were of the most terrifying kind. Referring to them, he observes, "What tales were current then of hangings, floggings, and imprisonments, of victims who were subjected to the horrible torture of the pitch-cap, of citizens and others grossly insulted by the soldiery, and domiciliary visits made in the most savage and repugnant manner. How often also were heard the drums suddenly beating in the street and the tramp of soldiers who were called out to search for arms in all directions. This I witnessed as a child;" and therefore I think it is evident that a child so sensitive as he describes himself to all impressions, painful or pleasurable, could scarcely have escaped injurious consequences, had not the watchful love of his mother been ever ready to avert them, to allay his terrors, renew his courage, or divert his thoughts to other subjects.

He was also not very fortunate in the neighbourhood he lived in. It was adjacent to Marlborough Green, where the once famous John Claudius Beresford had built a riding-house for his Yeomanry, within which, taking a hint from the Catholic annals he so much hated, he set up an Inquisition, and tortured suspected rebels [into confession by the lash. The yells of his victims were so frightful, and the wounds they showed were so outrageous that, according to Sir Jonah Barrington, a party of grim satirists stole one evening the signboard of a washerwoman, and placed it over the gate with its significant inscription, "Mangling done here." The memory of these cruelties hung round the building like a deadly odour long after they had been practised; and Lover, who passed it on his way to school, often saw it furiously glanced at, perhaps by some of the sufferers, and heard the low growl of "Beresford's blood-hounds," the term applied to his pitiless followers. Beresford himself—I need not say, banker, magistrate, and member of Parliament—was one of the most active agents of the Government in the suppression of the Rebellion, and by his outrages was supposed by many to have purposely incited it, in order that it might justify the Union. Curran called him "the State apothecary, who put a poultice on the insurrection in order to bring it to a head;" and another wit described him as "the Court historian, who traced his record on the shoulders of his countrymen."

It is the privilege of the time we live in that we can look back calmly and honestly at the excesses of those

days, and reduce their evil to its just dimensions by connecting effects with causes. Whilst centuries of wrong and suffering explain, if they cannot justify, the savage vengeance of the peasants, on the other side there must be pleaded a manifest state of panic, similar to that which prevailed in Paris during the first Revolution, which, incapable of estimating the strength or extent of the revolt, was urged into the worst reprisals in order to suppress it. Of all emotions fear is the cruelest ; it becomes cowardice transformed to frenzy. At the same time it must be owned that, however horrible or lamentable, the struggle would have been scarcely Irish had there not mingled with its terrors a certain element of the grotesque. What a fact was that of the peasants resolving to ruin their enemy Beresford by destroying his bank-notes, lighting their pipes with them, and even turning them into wadding for their guns, wholly unconscious that in so doing they were replenishing his exchequer.*

What a fact again, on the other side, was that of the loyal giant Lieutenant Hepenstal, who, towering almost to seven feet, with chest and muscles in proportion, dispensed with the formalities of assembling juries and erecting gibbets, and on encountering a supposed criminal threw a rope round his neck, and swung him over his own shoulders, as he would have done a young deer or a rabbit, there to dangle till he was dead.† Could such an absurd horror as

* Fitzpatrick's "*Curious Family History*," p. 158.

† Madden's "*United Irishmen*," p. 308.

that have possibly happened anywhere but on the peculiar soil of Ireland? The "Walking Gallows," as he was called, was surely a conception proper only to the brain of Jacques Callot.

One of the most extraordinary features of the time, however, was the conduct of the English military, who, whilst Catholic and Protestant were flying at each other's throats, seemed to declare war against them both, and think it sufficient criminality if a man happened to be an Irishman. This was peculiarly the case in Dublin, which the soldiers treated as a conquered city, and where they tyrannized over all classes without distinction of creed or spirit. Lover, whose knowledge of them in the streets had already inspired him with the deepest terror, was destined to have his feeling aggravated by an outrage on his own home. Soldiers, in those days, were billeted on the citizens of Dublin, but the occupants of private houses had the option of giving a trooper a shilling, in order that he might get a bed elsewhere. On one occasion, when Mr. Lover was absent at his office, a soldier with a drummer-boy made his appearance at his door, and on being tendered the two shillings, refused to take them, and insisted on sleeping in the house instead, coupling the demand with a remark and look which were very offensive to Mrs. Lover. Ordered to wait outside the dwelling whilst she sent word to the "Billet Office," he boldly entered the hall and tried to close the door, upon which Mrs. Lover in her fright rushed to the steps,

followed by her child, where she was discovered by her husband, when he at length returned from business, trembling, pallid, and almost speechless. Enraged, of course, at such an insult, he sprang into the house, when the soldier attempted to draw his bayonet, but was speedily knocked down and afterwards closed with in a struggle, which lasted amidst the yells of Master Samuel and the drummer-boy until an officer arrived from the Billet Office to offer an apology and remove the culprit.

"What a scene," remarks Lover, "was this for a delicate child to witness, one who was more than usually susceptible of terrifying impressions. Here was an English soldier outraging an Irish Protestant home. What other feelings could it awaken than those of aversion to a red-coat? In such a mental soil as mine is it a wonder that the seeds of patriotism took root and sprang up quickly? Every word I heard after that of English oppression and Irish wrong I eagerly caught at and well remembered, till in my sixteenth year I had become as staunch an assertor of national rights as ever trod my native soil."

It will startle most people, I think, to learn that the genial and mirthful being who so long enlivened the English public and so loved and cheered English society had, up to his youth, no deeper feeling than that of hatred to England and her soldiery. Time, however, the great enlightener, and the influence of English families, gradually relieved him of this feeling, though the change was never at the cost of his honest and ardent love of his country; he

never forgot her mournful history, nor became insensible to the many and great claims she had to urge, not only on English justice, but English gentleness and mercy. I believe the number is enlarging daily of those who agree with him on these points, and who watch with the profoundest interest that better course of legislation which is now endeavouring temperately and honestly to heal the wounds of Ireland, and make her future offer some repayment for the wrongs and sufferings of her past.

But to return to the opening days and indoor life of our little hero. He was distinct from other children in the group of gifts that he possessed, the powers implanted if still slumbering within the rim of his tiny brain; and it may be interesting to know which of the crowd was the first to show itself. It was music. Melody, whilst he was still an infant, absorbed the soul of Samuel Lover. He shared with Moore and many others an early initiation into the song and legend of his country; but among the advantages as well as blessings which he possessed in his good mother were her musical taste and a sweet voice, with which she nightly sang him to sleep to one of the wild airs of his land, and thus, it would almost seem, infused his dormant genius with all that purity and tenderness which were to be among its best distinctions. Accident, however, as in most cases, revealed the presence of the gift. Companionless for many years, owing to the dying off of his brothers and sisters, his parents were at length induced to send him to a friend's house, where there were children he could play

with, but very soon the little visitor was missed from among the bevy, and at last discovered in a remote room, standing before an old piano, whose key-board when on tiptoe he could scarcely reach with his chin, and trying to poke out on it with his chubby fingers one of the popular tunes of the day. An old musician who happened to be present was so much impressed by the discovery that with the combined exuberance of artist and Irishman he told Mr. Lover, senior, he "would be guilty of a sin" if he failed to have the child taught music ; and Mr. Lover, very properly shrinking from so grave a responsibility, bought the little fellow a piano, and engaged a master to give him lessons.

It is curious to observe in this occurrence the first indication of the spell which the genius of Thomas Moore seemed to throw over the mind and life of Lover. It was Moore's air of "Will you come to the Bower?" the great favourite in those days of all circles, Irish or English, that urged the tiny fingers of the child to their first attempt at execution. It was at a dinner in honour of Moore that Lover made his first public appearance, as the writer of a song addressed to the poet, which he sang and was encored in amidst the acclamations of the room ; and it was by his portrait of Moore's son, Russel, when his fame was rising in a sister art, that he gained from some of his best judges in London the most flattering acknowledgments. It is scarcely necessary to add that Moore's genius throughout life won from no one more than Lover the highest and heartiest admiration, and as a song-writer especially the

former was never so justly estimated as by the latter in his preface to the collected edition of his own Lyrics.

But perhaps it may be asked what was the progress, all this while, of Master Samuel's education. He was first sent to a dame-school, kept by a lady named McCausland, an elderly handmaid of Minerva, hook-nosed, spectacled, and snuffy, whose rigidity was so much softened by the fascinations of her pupil, that she rewarded his triumphs in the alphabet with an extraordinary amount of kissing. This, however, was an encouragement which he was so much in the habit of receiving from an extensive circle of pretty girls, that he seems to have been sadly indifferent to the peculiar prize marks of his teacher; and, at length, much to his delight, was advanced to a boys' academy, where his application became so great, and his little brain proved so retentive, whilst his hunger for works of fiction was a something so omnivorous, that at last his health began to suffer, and the family doctor saw the necessity of suspending his instruction and ordering him for a time into the country, where, under the influences of fresh air, perfect freedom, and good exercise, his muscular system might be brought up to a level with his mental. His parents, whose affection for him would not have hesitated at a much more exacting proof than this, easily found him a comfortable home at a farm-house in the heart of Wicklow, where two of the doctor's chief injunctions were that he should have the free use of a pony and that he should never touch a book.

I must say, however, there was another and still more

urgent reason for this visit. He had now reached the age of twelve, and despite the precautions of his mother, his ardent, impressionable nature had acquired a degree of sensibility, partly, of course, the result of temperament and partly perhaps of romantic reading, which threatened his health a great deal more than any immediate effects of study. His daughter, whose recollections I have great pleasure in referring to, relates his saying that, when a child, he constantly reproduced in dreams the fairy stories that were told him, and felt their illusions to be so enchanting, that he seldom woke to find them vanished but he gave way to a burst of tears. He was also never happy when he saw a song-bird in a cage, he had such a sense of its captivity, and longed so much to set it free.

All this was very amiable, but it showed the taint of mental fever, and in his mother's eyes, of course, formed a fresh cause for his removal. It was the last effort of her love for him, her death occurring shortly afterwards—an event which, as I have said already, became the first grief of his life, and a grief which might have been injurious but for the effect of his new surroundings. Nature, however, was his consoler—a second mother, if not the best one, who awoke new thoughts and sympathies, whilst she bestowed on him the gain of his active life and hearty appetite on the breezy hills of Wicklow. Here his invigoration was so great that he grew up with a robustness which was scarcely to know an hour's failure—a fund of ardour and animal spirits that was to answer every demand

of his manifold activity. Here on a basis of prosaic strength he may be said to have laid the foundation of all his future mental energy.

This visit, however, was of benefit in a variety of ways. It probably exerted considerable influence on the coming artist as well as man. If music, as we have seen, was the first of his many gifts to stir itself, painting was the second, and the more important of the two, since it was the one he was to adopt and win his bread by as a profession. Long ere this period he must have felt its promptings, and have endeavoured to appease them by many a rude attempt at drawing and vain experiment with brushes, feeling not only the beauty of form but that sweet mystery of lights and tints to which as yet he possessed no key, however powerfully impelled to search for it. Now, face to face with Nature, all these promptings must have strengthened: sense must have replied to spirit, and instinct begun to feed on what was to change it into capacity. Especially it is not unlikely that this visit may have served to develop what was to become his great distinction—his sense of colour, the great vehicle of life and brilliancy, the analogue of melody in the sister art of music. In his mountain walks and rides all the bright phenomena of nature were daily unveiled before him—the golden splendours of the dawn, the tender and blending hues of evening, the gleam of waters, the bloom of flowers, and the vivid “greeneth”—to use an Americanism—of the ever dewy Irish verdure. All these were surveyed and felt by him,

and doubtless all assisted in arousing the charming faculty which was one day to reproduce them.

I do not think I assume too much in attributing another influence to this visit to the country. It was now he gained his first acquaintance with the peasantry of Ireland, and it was with the eyes that saw them now he ever continued to behold them. In later and longer rambles he may have gathered the rich material with which he illustrated their character, the manifold traits and jests and incidents which he has embalmed in song and legend; but the spirit in which he painted them was ever that of boyhood. He saw them always, as he saw them first, only on the sunny side of their nature, in all its gaiety, its tenderness, its humour, and simplicity, which, contrasting as it did so strongly with the *lilac* spirit of society, he was ever content to trace as the entire portrait of the man. Had it been his fate, like some other writers, to pass his days among the peasantry, and witness the wants and oppressions which have so often stirred their passions and overcast their history, he would doubtless have felt bound to show that these generous and affectionate but still fiery and impulsive beings had a tragic side to their character which was just as essential to its truth.

But this visit to the country had its pleasures as well as uses. Rural life was entirely new to him, and he watched with the greatest interest its varied and successive labours—the more especially since he found that they were all accompanied with song. The ploughman sang to his horses,

and the milkmaid to her cow, and even the blacksmith plied his hammer to sounds that measured out its fall. The song or whistle of the ploughman was particularly pleasing, nothing shrill in it or monotonous, but a charming melody whose burthen was as rational as it was musical, since it assured the attentive animals that if they pulled well they would have oats; and whose varying cadences, Lover says, an imaginative listener might almost have interpreted by their effect upon the team. Seed-time, again, before drills or other implements were introduced in Ireland, was not wanting in attraction. The sower still preserved his simple patriarchal aspect as he strode along the furrows, and, from an apron swung before him, flung his seed about him broadcast, with a regularity of movement that no machine could excel. Mowing also was a pleasant sight to him, if merely because it recalled the *Allegro*, whose enchanting pictures were among the first to impress his imagination, though their enjoyment had now passed into the limbo of forbidden pleasures :

“And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe ;”

and with harvest-time and sheep-shearing came other novelties to note, relieved by visits to neighbouring towns and country fairs on market days, where the whiskey and the dancing-booths, the frolicking and fighting, opened up a view of Irish humour so new to one who had never been allowed to gaze on the merriment of Donnybrook.

He had also pleasures nearer home. A lively little

river ran through the adjoining fields and valleys, which was famous for the silver eels that bred and wriggled in its shallows, and the teal and wild duck that domesticated among the rushes on its banks. Here he was delighted at the adroitness with which a servant of the family speared the eels for the Friday's dinner, and not less tickled with the failures of the *paterfamilias*, his worthy guardian, who, day after day in the shooting season, carried his gun to the river-side, and loaded and fired for hours together without bringing down a bird, his exclamation always being, "Now, I am sure I hit that fellow; but these ducks are mighty strong—they carry off a dale of shot."

At length his visit came to an end. In a year it had completely realized the injunction of the doctor, that he should remain away till he had grown as hearty and as ignorant as his own colt. He had as thoroughly got rid of all his undue susceptibility as he had of most of the knowledge so laboriously acquired at school. Of the now composed tone of his nerves an amusing proof was given. Accompanying the farmer on a visit to a neighbour's house for a few days, one of the servants, in order to frighten him, told him the house he was going to was haunted—that a woman without a head was known to walk about it every night. Upon which the now invigorated as well as wondering boy exclaimed, "Well, I am glad to hear of that, for I never saw one in all my life."

CHAPTER II.

1810—1818.—Restored Health and Return to Dublin—Lover's Boyhood—His Gaiety and Enjoyment—His Contact with the Dublin Populace—Characteristics of their Humour—Specimens—History of Dublin connected with his own—Picture of the City at Three Periods—Belligerent and Uproarious—The Liberty and Ormond Quay Boys—Their Contests and Excesses—The Trinity College Students, the great Patrons of the Drama—The Immunities of the College Court—The Debtor and the Pump—The Bucks of Dublin—Pinkindies—Sweaters—Chalkers—Buck English and Buck Sheehy, &c.—Dublin's second and fortunate Period—Improved Society and Manners—Its Senate and its Stage—Its Decline and lavish Extravagance—The Reign of reckless Dissipation—Coaches and Six on the Grand Drive, &c.—A third Picture of Dublin—Its Bankruptcy and Gloom—Effect of the Rebellion—Effect of the Union—Absenteeism—Increased Taxation—Decay of Trade—Their Influence on the future of Lover—He begins Life as a Stockbroker—His unfitness for Business yet love of Work—The Outbreak of his Talents—His Father's Terror and Endeavours at Repression—The Conflict and its Climax—Lover's Resolve to quit his Home and become a Painter—The Difficulties of the Attempt—His want of Money, want of a Market, and also want of Art—Nevertheless his courageous Venture—Its Sustainment and Result.

It was at the close of his thirteenth year that Master Samuel returned to Dublin to delight his father with the sight of a delicate sensitive child, transformed into a hearty, hilarious boy, whose constitution, as his daughter tells us, was henceforth to be one of iron. A quarter of a century afterwards, when he had undergone the wear and tear

of a laborious youth and manhood, she was still able to say of him that neither the sedentary life of the artist, nor the increasing strain of his duties, nor the fatigues of a London season, could ever throw him out of health. "I never knew him to be ill for many years of anything more serious than a few hours' headache." Such were the fortunate results of this little visit to the country. Nature, as if flattered by the appeal to her, had sent him back with a charmed life.

There is much in Lover's boyhood that is pleasant to recur to. It was simple and affectionate, mingling that love of home and society which was to enlarge into the still rarer and worthier distinction of his after years. One of its most characteristic features was its overflowing gaiety. Health was the unsealing of a spring of spirits in him that was never to run dry, and which had the peculiar charm about it, that, old as he might grow, it had a spontaneity and freshness that always reminded you of childhood. Health was to him the "Open Sesame" that practically endowed him with all the blessings of a sanguine temperament, giving vigour to capacity, intensity to taste, and the ready power of extracting happiness from the simplest of resources and in the most familiar of directions. Nor was his bodily renovation less advantageous to him mentally. Sent to school again, he not only speedily recovered all he had lost, but he showed the capability of acquiring so much more, that his teachers suggested the propriety of his being

prepared for Trinity College, with the view of his ultimately entering one of the liberal professions. Such a proposal was of course highly gratifying to his father, but he had other and, as he thought, less uncertain prospects for his son. To his physical improvement also, I fancy, may be traced another of that son's attractions—his pleasing musical voice, which, though it broke when he grew up into a mere medium of feeling and expression, now could pour forth the national airs with great fervour and emotion.

During the year and a half's schooling that completed his education, and in a direction, it appears, that was rather practical than elegant, all his crowd of mental instincts, his embryonic gifts and tendencies were of course stirring, and fluttering, and gradually maturing for the day in which they should change into capacities. Two of these—music and painting—I have ventured to think received an impulse from his visit to the country, and now another quite as important was destined, I believe, to be stimulated with a like success in Dublin—his humour—the especial trait that marked him as a story and a song writer. A vigorous youth of fourteen, Lover was at length allowed to traverse the metropolis in freedom, and it was a great enjoyment on all his holidays to make its thorough exploration, and confirm by actual eyesight all he had ever heard or read of it. There were its various historical monuments and seats of local and social tradition, and to the opening sense of the artist there was also the charm of

its noble architecture, which had so long secured the city a European reputation. But whilst intent on this survey, another spectacle confronted him, which, I cannot help believing, was of infinitely deeper interest. This was the populace of Dublin—the life that stirred and chequered it—that strange eccentric multitude which swarmed in all its alleys, and overflowed its quays and bridges; that busy, motley, mirthful, many-coloured tide of being, which rippled every moment with some flash of true facetiousness or some happy trait of character. The growing humorist could scarcely be indifferent to such a throng as that. He had too much of their ruling quality in his own vivacious veins to contemplate its outbreaks without feeling its quickening influence. At the same time it is very singular that, considering the world of whim and oddity which such a crowd contained, he never went to it for subjects. He passed half his life amidst it, and, save in a single instance, never drew from it an illustration. The peasant, not the civilian, was the subject of his pencil; and the peasant, as I have said already, only on his sunny and genial side.

The humour of the Dublin populace was certainly something quite distinctive. It was the national sense of the ludicrous sharpened by city needs and shifts into a scheming ingenuity: it was mirthfulness made subtle in the hopes of winning a “thirteener.” I remember a couple of examples of it that may be considered worth repeating. A large-framed, healthy, ruddy man, who was a confirmed

hypochondriac, planting his foot before a shoeblack, was complimented on his looks. "Oh, nonsense!" he exclaimed, "I'm breaking up, Pat, breaking up." "Breaking up, is it, you are, sir?" was the quick and sagacious answer; "then, by my sowl, I wish I was rich enough to purchase the materials!" Again, a gentleman who had engaged a carman to take a party into the country, objecting to the wretched horse he brought as wanting strength for such a load. "Well, sir," replied the driver, "perhaps he hasn't strength exactly, but let me tell you, sir, that baste has a mighty dale of consate in him."

Dublin, however, had something special in it beside the humour of its populace; it had a history for seventy years that was as full of contrasts and surprises as that of its "Bucks" in the past century. It had its growth and its prosperity marked by the same spirit of excess, and its wind up with what for the most part was a like collapse of bankruptcy. And as the last period has a certain bearing on Lover's outset in the world, and indeed may be regarded as its proper introduction, I may be allowed to pause for a moment, and recount a few particulars.

The city's growth, as I call the period dating from the middle of the century, when, with the rebuilding of Trinity College, its noble architecture began to rise, was little else than a prolonged uproar. The capital was just as riotous as the country at large was miserable. The three national passions of the time were drinking,

gambling, and fighting, and, of this truly Hibernian triad, fighting was certainly the favourite. The writer of "Sketches in Ireland Sixty Years Ago" (published in 1849), an indisputable authority, enlightens us upon the subject with many striking recollections. He shows us that, however his countrymen may have differed in those days, they were all agreed on one point,—that of battering one another. The pistol of the upper class and the cudgel of the lower alike demonstrated the fact that pugnacity was a something constantly secreting in their veins, which they required at certain intervals to get rid of in a combat. It is hard to say there was any vindictiveness or bad feeling in the matter, it was a physical necessity similar to that of certain systems which periodically demand the benefit of alterative medicines.

In Dublin the national distinction obtained force from concentration. Of what other capital in Europe could be instanced such a fact as the constant and terrible conflicts of the Liberty and Ormond Quay Boys? The former were a mass of weavers, the descendants of a Huguenot colony who found a home in Dublin after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and who seemed to have felt it a point of honour to belabour the Catholics they neighboured in order to keep up the memory of the good old wars of the *bien publique*. The latter were the city butchers, who, though now perfectly content to slaughter cattle instead of heretics, still were always ready for a *mêlée*, and very happy to assist their

foes in dabbling the ragged skirts of Irish history in the gutters. Thus, whenever the weavers, grown belligerent, swarmed down on them from their heights, a fight would last for several days, during which the streets became impassable, all business was suspended, whilst the guardians of the city's peace, unable to separate the combatants, quietly took up good positions from which they could survey and criticise them.

In an outbreak that occurred in 1790 it was said a thousand men were engaged, who, with all the heat of battle, filled the air with their shouts and groans, and strewed the ground with their bruised and wounded. There was a struggle for one of the bridges worthy of the ardour of old Rome. Nor were their weapons on these occasions always confined to sticks and cudgels. The butchers would occasionally use their knives to "hough" their adversaries, that is, to cut the tendon of the leg, by which the sufferer was maimed for life, and the weavers would retaliate by hanging the butchers on their own hooks, carefully displacing all the dead joints and suspending the live ones by their jaws.*

Nor were these conflicts always limited to the ignorant and vulgar. Men of the highest rank and influence were known to have had a share in them. The young aristocrat who would have felt himself immeasurably degraded by associating, however transiently, with an honest tradesman, or even a merchant, made a boast of the ties he had formed with the butchers or the weavers, and the enjoyment he had

* "Sketches of Ireland Sixty Years Ago," p. 4.

derived from the savage excesses of the streets. Such an anomaly is only to be explained by the existence of a mental epidemic. There was a contagion in the exchange of blows which neither high nor low were proof against. It was not only the man of Donnybrook, but the "curled darling" of the time, who, as he lounged wearily at a levée or yawned all day in his club window, felt "blue-moulded for want of a bating."*

To the noble cause of uproar the students of Trinity College were no mean contributors. From the day their splendid structure re-opened for the cultivation and advancement of the Irish mind the statue of Mars as much as of Minerva had a right to a place on its pediment. The students never failed to take part in the above riots (supporting the weavers as good Protestants), and they employed a formidable weapon, in the heavy keys of their rooms, which they converted into slings by tying them in the tails of their college gowns. But their especial field was the theatre, where the muscular taste of the roysterer could be varied and augmented by the mental zest of the critic. At any slight to a theatrical favourite or rebuff from an unpliant manager, they were ready to demolish the house, or run the offender through the body.

They made it a practice to attend the rehearsals, where, forming a circle round the performers, they compelled the latter to submit not only to their presence, but their judgment; and at night, when they took their places in the

* "Sketches of Ireland," p. 4.

front rows of the pit, their method of condemning an actor's errors was by assailing him with oranges. To the actresses their conduct knew no limit of audacity. They would cross the orchestra during the performance, hunt the ladies to their dressing-rooms, and there keep them imprisoned whilst the audience was waiting their re-appearance. The well-known "Kelly riot," of which Victor has left us an account, shows a party of them, who were enraged with the manager, the elder Sheridan, leaping on to the stage with their drawn swords, driving the actors before them in a crowd, and piercing the scenes and clothes-chests, with the view, as they said, of "feeling for him."

And of course these decorous youths were possessed of their immunities. The interior of Trinity College was made a sanctuary to debtors, and woe to the unhappy bailiff who dared to violate its precincts. A wooden pump stood in its forecourt, to which the delinquent was instantly dragged and subjected to a drenching which, as it often improved his body, it was hoped would purify his mind. It is even related that on one of these occasions a tutor happened to pass, who, instead of rescuing their victim, exclaimed to them sarcastically, "Be merciful, gentlemen! be merciful! don't nail his ears to the pump,"—a hint which was of course received with a shout of approbation, a hammer and nails being procured at once, and the poor wretch secured to the wood in the cruel way that had been suggested,—a barbarity which, if it can be

considered the less heinous because in sport, still, whether on the part of teacher or pupil, is a tolerable index to the time.*

Certainly the "Lords of Misrule" in Dublin who reigned for more than half a century belonged rather to the higher than the lower classes of society. Best known by the name of "Bucks" throughout their turbulent career, they were mostly members of the aristocracy, the young fashionable "Bloods" of the time, who, in addition to gaming and duelling, found no other way of letting off their superfluous vivacity than by pouring nightly into the streets, and breaking everything they met with—heads and limbs, or lamps and windows. The genus *buck*, however, had its varieties. At one time he was the "Mohawk," who, in emulation of his ruthless model, rushed abroad when it was dark for the perpetration of any savagery; and at another he was the "Pinkindie," who, with a barbarity that was as ingenious as it was decidedly prudential, cut off the tip of his scabbard in order to lay bare the point of his sword, by means of which he was enabled to prick his victim full of holes without inflicting a serious injury.

Again, he was a "Sweater," who stormed houses at midnight, and scared people out of their lives under pretence of searching for arms. And once more he was the "Chalker," who was but another form of Mohawk—a ruffian that the Parliament found it necessary to pass an act against. Of these enliveners of the streets of Dublin,

* "Sketches of Ireland," p. 6.

of course there were special instances who rose into due prominence, such as Buck English and Buck Sheehy, heroes who, in order to provoke a combat, would occupy the crossing of a chief street on a sloppy day, and in the politest terms imaginable offer you the alternative of mud or gunpowder ; or who drew your attention to their rooms, where every accommodation for a duel was provided, by saluting you as you passed their windows with a jug of dirty water.

One of these worthies who had shot his friend bore the cognomen of "Kill Kelly," and another who had wounded his servant was distinguished as "Kill Coachy ;" whilst there were three noble brothers who derived their curious titles chiefly from local associations. The youngest, who was lame, was denominated Cripplegate ; the second, who was constantly in prison, was called, with some propriety, Newgate ; whilst the eldest and most abandoned and utterly reckless of the three was branded with the horrid name of "Hellgate." To this period also belongs the painful and repulsive memories of "Tiger Roche" and "Fighting Fitzgerald"—beings whose ferocity was so remarkable, that it is only charitable to suppose they were, for more than half their existence, maniacs.

Gambling and drinking were also proper to this era of disorder in Dublin ; but still, I am inclined to think, more in connection with the higher than the lower classes of the city. Though the old historian Campion says that gambling was conspicuous among the vices of the ancient

Irish, its chief evidence at the time in question was in relation to the Lotteries established or sanctioned by the Government, whilst in regard to the other evil—drinking—if the working man indulged too freely at a fair or a festivity, the gentleman was scarcely thought himself who did not consume his three bottles daily. On the whole, then, it must be owned that up to the time of the Volunteers (among whose good deeds, not the least was their establishing the night patrols that put an end to the rule of “Buckism”) the city’s growth was sadly uproarious, and, if we allow ourselves to be candid, not a little savage in addition.

Turbulent, however, as was this outset, a better period was to follow. Though Dublin’s apparent wealth and luxury had many years before attracted the attention of the English senate, it was not till 1783 that Ireland at large was to be congratulated. It was when her Parliament had regained its freedom, her commercial restrictions were removed, and the unhappy Catholics were relieved of some of the shackles of the Penal Code, that a new and benignant era seemed to be dawning on the country, whose influence, of course, was most expressly felt in the capital. Its social disorders were extinguished (if there were political ones to follow), its general means were increased, its beauty much enlarged by the extension of its splendid architecture, whilst advantages just as important were obtained in its society.

Before 1782 the Sessions of Parliament were biennial,

so that its members, being required in Dublin only every other year, were mostly but brief visitors ; but now they took up their abode in it, with their fashionable families and connections—two hundred and fifty belonging to the Peerage, and three hundred to the House of Commons, and so composed a leading class, whose affluence, elegance, and gaiety rendered this city one of the most brilliant and attractive residences in Europe.* Most of the Peerage were individuals of the highest taste and cultivation ; others, of more ability, were warmly devoted to their public duties ; whilst a large proportion of the Commons were the true old gentry of the land—men of the most festive and hearty type, who represented Irish character quite as thoroughly as Irish interests. However they ranked as legislators, there was no question of their worth as residents, social and generous as they were to a fault, with their fine old family pride stepping in to sustain expenditure whenever prudence sought to check it. And in their wake were drawn to Dublin many others of the country class, who had been warring all their lives with gout, mortgages, and lawyers, and sought a truce in the metropolis by means of good claret, whist, and intercourse.

The influence of such society was, of course, highly exhilarating. These people were all patrons ; they liberally encouraged the arts and industries ; they gave their dinners, balls, and concerts, and kept flowing throughout the season the fellow streams of money and hilarity with

* “Detail of Facts relating to Ireland,” p. 59.

due sympathetic vigour. A further source of this improvement was the viceroyalty of the Duke of Rutland (in 1784), a man of the most genial and generous character, and whose lovely and accomplished Duchess stamped the Castle entertainments with an elegance and dignity which they had never before exhibited. And to this happy period also belonged the glory of the Irish senate, the eloquence of Grattan, Flood, and Yelverton, of De Burgh, Brownlow, and Curran, and the flourishing condition of the Irish stage, which John Kemble and Mrs. Jordan brightened with the first gleams of their excellence. This was a period that was further marked by the temporary quiet of the country, by the rise of rents and the value of property, and the immediate augmentation both of commerce and manufactures.

Unhappily, however, this was a period too good to last. Moderation had not hitherto been the characteristic of an Irishman. He had an appetite for pleasure that somewhat tended to a surfeit; so a banquet came to-day, he cared little for the fast to-morrow; he enjoyed life as he did his claret, he drained the full cup to the bottom. Consequently this change of things in Dublin speedily ran into excess. A reign of lavish expenditure and extravagance set in, that ultimately conduced to the widest ruin and disaster. Money was obtained at any cost, to be spent in the wildest profusion, and doubtless, also, to support the gambling which assisted its disappearance—and once the mania had commenced, various motives served to sustain it.

The family pride which had burthened estates to maintain the rank of country gentlemen, was scarcely less exacting in the support of their style as senators, and the vanity which had envied fruitlessly superior birth and station, saw a means of rising to their level in inordinate indulgence. The leaders of fashion became engaged in a race down a declivity, and the whole field very soon partook their heat and their misfortunes. The princely scale of their establishments, the sumptuous taste of their entertainments, and the rich parade of their dress and jewellery, were things only to be paralleled by the displays which were seen in Paris. Coaches and six were then the rage, and Lord Cloncurry tells us in his Memoirs, that on the North Circular Road—which was then the fashionable drive of Dublin—he had witnessed on a Sunday as many as eight or ten of these regal equipages, and the same number of coaches and four, followed by a long line of other carriages, which moved in slow and grand procession between a double row of horsemen.*

To all this extravagance the Court of the viceroy only too heartily responded ; and when, towards the close of the century, the struggle arose to establish the Union, political feeling set up a rivalry which carried these excesses to a height. The Court, with the necessary policy of winning allies to the side of Government, increased the range of its attentions and the brilliancy of its receptions ; whilst, to counteract their effect, the opposition leaders launched into

* "Personal Recollections," p. 218.

more costly hospitalities, which still further enlivened the city, if by impoverishing themselves. Nor was the evil exhausted here. The leading members of the professions and the principal merchants and men of business caught the luxurious infection, and even the higher sort of tradespeople, who were enriched by this state of things, showed their gratitude at last by partaking its spirit and its cost. At the same time it must be owned that they were somewhat excused by their temptations. The jovial, joke-loving Duke of Rutland had knighted such a crowd of them, that it was said you could not give an order for beef or butter of a morning, but the man who stood behind the counter would be sure to jostle against you on the Castle stairs at night.

In terrible contrast to all this came a fourth period in the city's history. The rebellion and the Union put an end to this long revel, and brought its partakers to their senses in a very melancholy fashion. All their profusion was arrested, their buoyant gaiety extinguished, their splendour and ostentation seemingly swept away for ever. The day of reckoning had been delayed so long as the Parliament existed, credit still kept on its legs, and supplies, if costly, were forthcoming; but with the great political crash came also the social that was bound up with it, and the Union proved to Dublin what Absenteeism had been to the country. If there were many who were sadly embarrassed, there were more who were utterly ruined, whilst nearly all had to go abroad and seek retreats where a strict economy could

repair the effects of a grand delirium. Absenteeism—which had set in almost from the conquest of the island,—which had been denounced by various kings, from Edward III. to Henry VIII.,—which had drained Ireland, at the beginning of the century, of nearly half a million annually,*—which Swift had satirized in his *Drapier's Letters*, and it was the one virtuous endeavour of Lord North to try to tax—was a slowly widening stream, that swelled at the Union, into a torrent, and found in that occurrence both its great impulse and excuse.

The first blow to the city, the Rebellion, transformed its appearance as if by magic. The year previous, according to Lord Cloncurry, it was the model of a charming residence; the year itself, as described by a writer of great acuteness and observation, it resembled nothing so much as Paris at the height of the Reign of Terror. Doubt and fear were on every countenance; every house had become a barrack, every public building a prison, almost every street a place of execution.† This was certainly gloomy enough; and yet the calm that was established by the great legislative change was still more ominous to the city's welfare. Fashion and Government were departed, and only taxation was come instead, soon to be followed by "Berlin Decrees," and a second American war, that should crush the trade, the last dependence of this once gay and thriving capital. The lavish legislator and the

* Prior's "List of Absentees,"

† "Historic Sketches of Dublin," p. 32.

affluent visitor were no longer to be seen, but only citizens saddled with fresh burthens, and merchants ruined by embargoes. Up to 1815, there was scarcely a city in the kingdom that was more prostrated than Dublin. To repeat the expressive oddity of a now forgotten humorist, "Nothing was stirring in it but stagnation."

A city's history such as this occurring in a term of seventy years may well be called extraordinary. Compressed within the limits of an ordinary human life, what a series it exhibits of striking contrasts and surprises: and it was in 1812, whilst Dublin was still lingering under, perhaps, its strongest change of all, that Samuel Lover—now fifteen—was preparing to enter the world. Widely and seriously as the great collapse must have affected many fortunes, not least decisive certainly was its influence on his own. Under his teachers, as I have said, he had displayed so much capacity that they advised he should be trained for College, and one of the liberal professions; but the great depression that had fallen on all interests and pursuits in Dublin, made his father doubly anxious as to the future of his son, and a little reflection had convinced him that it would be safest with himself. In his office there was at least the means of moderate subsistence, and this in union with all the advantages of paternal care and guidance. It was accordingly decided that Samuel Lover should become a stockbroker.

Wise, however, as was this decision, it will hardly be supposed it was found agreeable. Master Samuel had

naturally yearned for the higher teaching that had been denied him, and, with the gifts that were now maturing in him, could have but little taste for business. Least of all was he inclined to stockbroking, for which he had not the slightest adaptation. He had none of the financial talent to form a Stock Exchange celebrity, nor the least ambition in the world to become a grand Hibernian Bear or Bull. Fortunately, however, for his father's peace, he possessed a humbler quality, which, distinct from gift or talent, was just as essential to success, and which at the outset was quite sufficient to ensure filial obedience. This was a craving for exertion—an honest, hearty love of work, which made it a delight to him to do anything that was expedient or pleasant, and which, rather than submit to idleness, would have almost elected drudgery. This spirit of activity which belonged to the prose side of his mind, had the further merit of a thoroughness, or love to do a thing completely, which had led him to adopt one of Lord Chesterfield's good sayings—that "whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."

Accordingly, when he was apprized that he was to enter his father's office, little as he fancied the employment, he saw there was something to be done there, and much to his credit, he resolved that that something should be well done; and he *did* do it—so heartily that, to the delighted eyes of the parent, he doubly ratified the judgment which had decided on his career. Nothing could possibly be more encouraging than the outset of his labours. All this while,

however—need it be said?—there was another side to his mind which required to be put in action: all his crowd of artistic instincts, which had been so many years maturing, and which seemed to wait only till he was settled in order to come into existence. From the day he became a clerk, all those feelings that had been only flutterings gradually emerged into capacities, and, like fledglings in a nest, gaped and clamoured to be fed. This was a predicament out of which there was only one way of escape. The day belonged to his father—that was sacred to stocks and dividends, but the evening was his own, and so, as soon as work was over he betook himself to his chamber, and there applied himself to drawing, improved himself in music, and tried his hand at composition, in song, and story, and the drama. The leisure which it was expected he would give to exercise or pastime, he devoted to nourishing talents that he valued far more than his muscles.

What his father felt on discovering this it is not easy to describe. Great, of course, was his astonishment, not a little his irritation, but more than all perhaps was the chill of an illimitable terror. At a time when success in business demanded the entire mind and sympathy, such an outbreak could only be regarded as a deliberate choice of ruin. Art and business, which his son considered as two distinct domains, that could exist side by side under independent governments, were to him simply an instance of revolution invading order. Perhaps his alarm was all the greater that, much as he dreaded what he beheld, he was at first unable

to forbid it. So long as the office work was done he had no pretext for interfering. It was only when pleasanter tasks had gradually led to inattention, that he acquired the right to remonstrate, and call upon his son to renounce the beguiling pastimes which were so sure to end in beggary.

When warnings had proved fruitless, a little resistance was resorted to—now in the open form of obstruction, now in the keener one of sarcasm. The piano was locked up, the box of colours was mislaid, the song or story was either ridiculed or thrown into the fire. Of course all this but strengthened what it was intended to subdue. It was so much pressure on a column of water, that only served to send it higher. And especially did it fail to estrange its object from his love of painting, which, in the form of water-colour drawing, or perhaps some rude attempt at portrait, he at length began to look on as his future avocation. A graver remissness than usual brought this contention to a head. In addition to writing a play which was to be acted in a loft, and of which he had removed a difficulty by also painting its elaborate scenery, he had constructed a fantoccini theatre, with all its little actors and appliances; and his father, finding him one day deeply engaged among his puppets when he ought to have been among his customers, seized a poker, and with a few blows not only demolished the tiny structure, but anticipated the grand catastrophe with which its drama was to conclude.

Shortly after this explosion Mr. Lover sent his son to London, to finish, as it was said, his training in a superior

house of business, but, as I am disposed to think, to check, if possible, the influences that were becoming daily more enchaining; and at the end of a twelvemonth he came back less inclined to his work than ever, and more resolved to rely on his pencil as his future means of support. The struggle between desire and duty now of course grew very painful, the differences it elicited more frequent and unkindly; languor provoked remonstrance, remonstrance increased aversion, till at length this state of things was put an end to by an avowal which must have quenched every feeling in the father but amazement. It was nothing less than his son's resolve to go at once into the world, and without means or assistance commence life as a painter. A proposal so extraordinary and, as it must have seemed, so mad, had hardly been prepared for by the worst of their dissensions.

Here was a lad of seventeen—he was but a month or two beyond it—suddenly resolving to leave his home without the aid or sanction of a single friend, and with nothing to support him but a talent which he had yet to turn to account. All the money he was known to possess were the savings of his allowance, and these, at the very utmost, could not have exceeded a few pounds. Moreover, a step so hazardous was to be taken in a city, which, of all others, least invited it. Dublin had not yet recovered from her disastrous depression, and a place that had no longer either fashionable society, busy professions, or thriving tradespeople, was scarcely in a position to afford

employment to a painter. Nor was the marvel exhausted here. This youth, who, all unaided, resolved to throw himself on such a capital, and earn his bread by a resource not more substantial than that of art, had as yet no art to exercise.

It will scarcely be believed that the painting he relied on was a thing he had still to learn. He had not received up to this time, either in respect to drawing or colouring, so much as a day's instructions in its rules. He was entirely self-taught; but his self-teaching, of whatever worth, had not conducted him to any efficiency which would satisfy the public. His progress might have been extraordinary, but it was still far removed from the point, at which people are induced to prove their admiration by their money. But for the earnestness, the courage, I might almost say the pathos, of this poor fellow's self-reliance, there was something positively ludicrous in his want of preparation. At the same time, how Hibernian!—an artist without an art going to get his living in a city which could give him no employment. Samuel Lover in after years indulged in many a rich conception, but when in anything so original as that he had himself embodied?

Nevertheless, daring, hazardous, and even demented, as his purpose must have seemed, this youth surrendered everything in order to carry it out. This was no boy's dream, it must be remembered, no beautiful bubble sure to burst at the first shock of reality, no distorting or

blinding influence of vanity or passion—but a project that was resolved on in the soberest mood and with the calmest forethought, with the clearest perception of all its hindrances, and fullest knowledge of its cost. Here was the boldest of adventures undertaken in the coolest blood; the scheme that needed the utmost sympathy unsupported by the least; a fight for bread and fame in which every circumstance was against him—father and friends,—the time and place,—age, means, and inexperience; and yet, despite them all, this mere lad went into the struggle, sustained it at its worst, and came out of it victorious. There are many, I am well aware, who will question the prudence of such an effort, but few, I think, who will deny the heroic spirit it elicited.

CHAPTER III.

1815—1818.—*Lover's* Outset in Life—Its Date—His three years' Study as an Artist—Its Mystery—How he Worked and how he Lived—Alleviation of his Labours—Lady Morgan's Comment on his History—His *début* in Dublin as a Painter—Sketch of Irish Art—Its want of Antiquity, and why—Its Attachment to a Capital—More Imperial than Patriotic—Dublin Architecture chiefly English—Irish nevertheless in Spirit—Trinity College, the Custom House, the Royal Exchange, &c.—Irish Sculpture—The Merits of Smythe and Hogan—The "Ino and Bacchus" of Foley—Macdowell's "Eve," &c.—Irish Music—Its strange Deficiency—Its Glory connected with her Bards—Ireland has no great modern Musical Genius—Balfe, Rooke, and Vincent Wallace, Founders of the Romantic English Opera—Irish Painters: their Variety—Jervas, the friend of Pope—Barrett, one of the Founders of the Royal Academy—Barry, the *protégé* of Burke—Modern Artists: Sir Martin Archer Shee, Mulready, Danby, Maclise, O'Neil, Nicol, &c.—Irish Miniature Painters: Robertson, O'Reilly, Comerford—Irish Art Institutions: The Dublin Society, the Royal Hibernian Academy, &c.—Revival of Dublin's Prosperity—Return of distinguished Society, and Renewal of a Tribunal of Taste—*Lover's* outset as a Marine Painter—First attractions of Water-colour—His admiration of the Irish skies—His Studies of their Traits and Changes—His gradual Preference for Miniature—Its Popularity in Ireland—Its Extinction by Photography—Its Contrasts to the latter—Contrast of Miniature and Portrait—Miniature, the favourite of the Emotions—Formerly an addition to Irish dress—Comerford, its ablest Painter—His Refinement and technical Excellence—*Lover's* Merits by his side—His marked Individuality—His Vivacity and Gaiety—His advance to Grace and Sentiment—His second and more important stage, that of Dignity and Elevation—His Paganini Picture, &c.—*Lover's* Success in Miniature a striking proof of his love of Art.

SAMUEL LOVER, then, whilst still a boy, quitted his father's roof and office, to throw himself on the world and

fight his way, as best he could, by his own unassisted powers. He was not the first one who had done so. Youth and genius have tolerably often rebelled against authority and migrated to freer regions in order to found a kingdom of their own. Another Samuel and a brother humorist had almost done the same before him, though our "English Aristophanes," as it was the fashion once to call him, had no such difficulties to encounter as beset the steps of Lover.

What was the exact date of his "Hegira" I am not able to determine. His daughter, a good authority, says he was but little past sixteen. Mr. Campkin, in a pleasant sketch of him which accompanied a photograph, puts him down at three-and-twenty. I fancy the one term is as much too early as the other is too late. He was tolerably well known in Dublin when he was present at the Moore Banquet in 1818, which was before he was twenty-one. I believe his age was, as I have stated it; he was entering his eighteenth year—a time which, whilst it detracts nothing from the marvel of his case, is still sufficiently mature to sustain its credibility.

As respects his parting from his father, there must have been considerable pain on both sides. The latter, there is little doubt, was quite as conscious of his son's worth, and as deeply interested in his welfare, as the former was still inspired with the filial feeling that had always marked him. Wondering, grieving, and foreboding, the poor father could only dwell on the dangers of a

pursuit to whose charms he was himself insensible, and of whose rewards he was incredulous; and in a sad, respectful silence, the son could only listen to warnings which were much too weak to shake the resolution founded on a sense of awakened power. The mountains of the one mind sank into the molehills of the other. And as divergent as their convictions were their hopes when all was ended; those of the one an ultimate success, that would somewhat repay the parent for his terrors; those of the other a speedy failure, that would send his son back to his duties, all the wiser, and perhaps the happier, for the lesson he had received.

The three years that now ensued were among the most important in Lover's history. They were that term of toil and study during which he partly acquired his art, and was able to qualify himself generally for the position he was to win. And yet, strange to say, respecting an interval so interesting we have scarcely any information. Always reticent upon his early life, this is a part of it which Lover seems to have especially left blank. It was a period of obscurity which he had to endure with greater men, and, either from a prompting of pride or indifference, cared as little to refer to. His daughter, indeed, informs us that he worked hard during the time, and still continued without instruction in the principles of water-colour; but she knows nothing of the way in which those principles were gained, nothing as to what were his methods or experiments, or as to who became his models. And

yet, if it is a mystery how he managed to improve himself, it is still a greater one how he lived. If his mind required to be furnished, not less exacting was his purse.

He had been accustomed whilst at home to that most agreeable illustration of the doctrine of continuity, an unbroken succession of dinners—and how was it now obtained? If this is difficult to answer, it is at the same time very clear that he worked in some way so successfully as to be able not only to keep himself, but even to save out of his earnings. It was by means of such a surplus that he procured the refinements of his education, and was even enabled to indulge himself with the luxury of a guitar. It is probable that among other things he supported himself by portrait painting, for which he possessed a natural aptitude, and which, in its simplest and roughest form, could always command a certain market. He might have rapidly thrown off likenesses in pencil, chalk, and water-colour, which, charged at trifling sums, would have supplied his moderate needs, whilst increasing his proficiency, until his hand gradually strengthened to make attempts at miniature, that engaging branch of his art, by which he was ultimately to become known. He might also have taught drawing in his evenings and spare hours, or, like a great example—Rousseau—found a temporary resource in music copying.

But, whatever was the case with him, it is agreeable to learn that his life during this period, if laborious, was not depressing. His work itself was a compensation, now

he was free to pursue it at pleasure, and which, with every increase of power, must have made him less conscious of the present, in its fuller assurance of the end. He made friends, as he struggled on, who cheered him with their sympathy, and perhaps at times sustained him with their aid; he had his youth, his health, his spirits, and, above all, his imagination, which, out of his worst needs and annoyances, could lift him into many a little bright dream of success, till time and unceasing effort turned the dream into reality. Such was his preparatory period, which I cannot dismiss better than by a comment on the cause of it, that was made by Lady Morgan, that most impetuous and vivacious Irishwoman, whose words on the occasion were not a little characteristic of her daring but comic oddity. She told Lover that whilst she was engaged on her "*Life and Times of Salvator Rosa*," she had urged more strongly her objections to a parent opposing his children's bias, (as was the case with Salvator's father,) in consequence of her knowledge of his own history.

"I am at a loss," said she, "to account for that blind resistance which we see parents so often make to their children's wishes. For my part, if I had a son, and he even desired to become a highwayman, I should certainly not oppose him. On the contrary, I believe I should make him a present of a pair of pistols and a good horse to boot, and should only say to him, 'My dear boy, I am very unhappy at the choice you have made, but since

the gallows is your vocation, in Heaven's name pursue it ! only begin life like a gentleman ;' and so, giving him my blessing, I'd let him seek his fortune as he pleased."

We now arrive at a period of greater interest and publicity,—the close of this mysterious term of preparation and concealment, when in 1818, tolerably accomplished for his outset, Lover came before the Dublin public as a marine and miniature painter. Previously, however, to entering on the question of his merits, I think it as well to give a glance at what was the state of art in Dublin, in order the more clearly to indicate his place in it.

Irish art, I need not say, makes no pretensions to antiquity. The land of sages and of saints, "the sacred Island of the West," that for so many centuries lay enveloped in the awe-inspiring shadows of remoteness and religious solitude, had those shadows but slightly softened with any relieving sense of beauty. Strength and mystery, rather than grace, stamp the earliest remains of Ireland ; and if art had any life at all, it was in the sweet skill of her harpers, who have left us such priceless legacies in the ever enchanting national airs. Such a charge as this would seem impossible against a passionate and imaginative people, did we not know their unhappy history, the incessant state of convulsion in which they were involved for so many centuries, either in their resistance to their invaders or their feuds with one another. Scant was the space that was afforded for any influences of refinement. Their tastes were like their plants, possessions that for the

most part could only spring up in solitudes and root themselves in storms.

But art, it may be said, is not merely wanting in the past, it is scarcely more distinctive of the Ireland of to-day, and again the cause is obvious—it is a power that belongs to capitals; it is the offspring of society, when society obtains its highest form, and consequently its tendencies are more imperial than patriotic; it appeals to the widest range of sympathy and the highest awards of criticism. Thus, arising as it did in Ireland whilst she retained her independence, and her capital was invested with a metropolitan importance, no sooner did the Union reduce the latter to a provincial level, than art seemed to revolt at expanding in a local circle, and migrated to London to obtain imperial appreciation.

This fact is strikingly evidenced by that branch of art which has conferred the most celebrity on Dublin—the architecture that, in the past century, crowned her claims with such regal beauty, and which, if it sustains my words no further, by its non-transference to England, it is because its great achievements were not due to native genius. It is to Englishmen that Dublin owes her noble ornamentation—to artists who were drawn to her when, as a capital, she still demanded external grandeur; and it is some solace to the national pride to observe the way in which their creations seem to have caught the national spirit, in the rich measure of embellishment that interweaves with their strength and dignity. The tasteful

massive elevation of Trinity College by Sir William Chambers, the almost lavishly graceful conception of the Royal Exchange by Mr. Cooley, and the happy mingling of force and elegance, of profuse decoration with the most marked breadth of effect, which stamps the Custom House of Mr. Gandon, (I set aside his severer and more impressive "Four Courts,") seem to me to be all infused with a highly characteristic spirit.

Of Dublin's grandest ornament, however, when shall we ever learn the authorship?—the superb façade of her Houses of Parliament, with their receding centre of such magnificence, built under the direction of Sir Edward Pearce, but certainly not from his designs. Less eminent and more migratory has been the history of Irish sculpture. The bold and expressive statue of Lucas, which adorns the Royal Exchange, and the striking heads and bas-reliefs enriching the Custom House and other buildings, yield no ordinary testimony to the merits of Edward Smythe; the later fame of Hogan rests on a basis as substantial; but it is at the hands of Foley and Macdowell that native sculpture becomes illustrious; and, need it be added, it was in London they did their work and gained their fame. The spirited "Ino and Bacchus" of the one, and the exquisite "Eve" of the latter, which all must remember as the gem of the first Great Exhibition, can need no praise of mine, when their grace and spirituality awoke such general admiration.

As brief, but not as simple, has been the history of

Irish music. Here we are confronted with an enigma it seems impossible to solve. Music, of all arts, one would think, must have been developed with the greatest power on a soil that is called the "Land of Song;" and yet, extraordinary as it may seem, neither in quality nor quantity has the obligation been fulfilled. Ireland has not given us in the lapse of centuries one eminent musical genius. Of course her bards distinguish the past. They were all admirable harpists, and endowed, as every one knows, with a wonderful gift for melody; but in respect to modern times, whilst Italy, France, and Germany brighten with a galaxy of musical marvels—composers and executants, creative and scientific; and even dull, phlegmatic England can boast of her Purcell, Arne, and Bishop, her madrigal and glee writers, and her host of singers and instrumentalists—lyrical, passionate, fanciful—Ireland has not a solitary name to vie with them. She has not given us one grand opera, oratorio, or even symphony; nor, in the last century at least, one executant of eminence.

In Messrs. Warburton and Walsh's elaborate account of Dublin (1818) a list is appended of Irish celebrities in literature and art, and its lengthened roll does not include a single instance of a musician.* As the present century opens, Ireland can boast of nothing higher than the names of Michael Kelly and T. Cooke, vocalists and composers, however pleasing, who make not the slightest approach to genius. Beside them is Sir John Stevenson, a clever

* "History of Dublin," vol. ii. Addenda.

arranger of national airs ; and among executants, at a long interval, with all her skill and great endowments, comes the delightful Catherine Hayes. It is only in our own remembrance that any tribute which can be called appropriate has been rendered to the claims of Ireland by that trio who were as notable for their melodiousness as for their fancy, Balfe, Rooke, and Vincent Wallace, the creators, as they must be acknowledged, of the Romantic Opera of the English Stage.

Ireland's painters have been more numerous, but not less migratory, than her musicians. Three of them are tolerably familiar to the literary student—Jervas, the pupil of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and instructor of Pope in drawing ; George Barret, the clever landscape painter, who was one of the founders of the Royal Academy ; and the exuberant James Barry, the well-known *protégé* of Burke, who, with his vanity and aggressiveness, exhausted his patron's patience almost as much as he did his purse. Mr. Warburton gives a list of above forty Irish painters who flourished in the past century, many of whom were men of ability, such as Roberts, Hamilton, and Tresham, who painted landscape, portrait, and history ; and I may add Pope, the tragedian, afterwards a favourite at Covent Garden, whose tall and stately person some of my elderly readers may remember in their boyhood, at the Haymarket. The majority of these men, however, were never heard of in this country, so that subsequently to Barry, London knew nothing of Irish artists till the advent of Sir Martin

Arthur Shee, followed by Mulready the Irish Wilkie, the poetic and impressive Danby, the brilliant and vigorous Maclise, and, more recently, the characterizing richly-toned O'Neil; the peasant's painter, Nicol, a true pictorial humorist, Angelo Hayes, known by his marine subjects, Mr. Burton, and some others.

The above list is also notable for the number of miniature painters it contains. Robertson, O'Reilly, Wogan, and some more, of whom the first is considered the ablest, though all of them, I believe, were far inferior to Comerford, a man of sterling genius, who followed in the present century, and whose name, if not his presence, became tolerably well known in London. Dublin was also visited at this period by many foreign artists, such as Vanderhagen, De Gree, and the better known Angelica Kauffmann, who painted a portrait of "Dolly Munro," then the reigning toast of the capital, a young beauty who is said to have bewildered the Viceroy—the Marquis of Hertford—more than all the affairs of Ireland. A more memorable visit was that of "American" Stuart, who executed a number of his finest heads in Dublin, and of whose social eccentricities Mr. Herbert, in his "Irish Varieties," gives us some pleasant recollections.

It is to the credit of the Irish capital that it did something to encourage art, in the way of institutions. The "Dublin Society," founded in 1730 (chartered in 1745) for the purpose of developing manufactures by means of premiums and bounties—under the influence of Dr. Mad-

den, was extended to embrace the Fine Arts, and finally to establish schools for painting, architecture, and sculpture. A drawing academy was subsequently set on foot by the elder West, which was very well supported, whilst at a later date (1813), under the patronage of the Duke of Richmond and many of the nobility, the "Royal Irish Institution" was founded to promote a taste for art, by an annual exhibition of the ancient and modern masters. Long before this, however (1764), the painters had formed a society for exhibitions and other objects, which, broken up by many schisms, at length took permanent shape in the "Royal Hibernian Academy" in 1803, when it obtained a grant from Government, and in 1820 the gift of a handsome residence from Francis Johnson, the eminent architect, to whom Dublin is indebted for some of her finest modern ornaments—the Post Office, the Chapel Royal, and St. George's Church, with its noble spire.

Such is a brief history of Irish art up to the time of Lover's appearance, when, whatever was its condition generally or its advantages to others, it was, at least, favourable to himself in this, that he found in his walk of miniature but one opponent who was a man of genius, the gifted Comerford already named, who, if for a time much his superior, did him great service as an example, and became at length a valued friend. Other circumstances, and quite as important, were propitious to his outset. After a prolonged state of torpor Dublin was recovering her activity. The peace of 1815 had begun to revive her

trade and commerce and lead to a general increase of means, which was followed by the return of many of her old and distinguished residents. This was an ebb, if but a slight one, in the tide of Absenteeism, which had so long flowed into the neighbourhoods of Cheltenham and Bath, and, at the conclusion of the war, into the less expensive fields of France. Accordingly, the society was reconstituted, which brought back to the squares of Dublin something of their old taste and vivacity, their old elegant munificence—a group of the higher and middle class which could take an interest in matters of refinement, and become a tribunal for testing claims, and diffusing reputations. Nor was it likely to be insensible to the appeal of native talent, since in respect to art and literature every Irishman was patriotic. Whatever the creed or policy that divided his unhappy land, there was always a bond of sympathy which held together the most discordant ; the common honour of their country was a common source of exultation, and every proof of genius that sustained it, come from what quarter it might, was looked on in the light of an individual possession.

Lover commenced life as a marine painter. His selection of such a field instead of the wider one of landscape, is partly to be explained by the great love he had for the sea under its more agreeable aspects, and his residence in its vicinity. It is also easy to understand how water-colour itself, with its broad washes and free pencilling, must have attracted, in the first instance, a being of his impulsiveness.

The possibility of dashing off, with a few pregnant suggestive touches, a something whose clear intention would remove the need of much completeness, must have fascinated greatly a mind that, teeming with capacities, was necessarily more intent upon results than upon processes. Of course he speedily found out that this freedom was only to be acquired by very assiduous application, and not less that it involved a very close survey of nature, and it is probable that such survey formed a portion, and not the least enjoyable, of his preparatory period.

For all atmospheric teaching he scarcely could have been better off than under the skies of his own country. Their grey and shifting surfaces, with their moisture always acting as a neutralizing medium; their gorgeous dawns; their chequered noons; and their often wild and stormy sunsets, were all sources of instruction that he must have studied with avidity. Writing to his friend, Mr. Symington, in 1866, he very modestly refers to the power he acquired by this schooling, and explains it by his early admiration of Irish skies,—“their lovely forms, their delicate colours,—the intricate involutions of their broad masses of mist,—their brilliant lights, their delicate reflexes,—their shadows tender or heavy, and the perplexing suddenness of their changes.” He also mentions his love of the sea; but admits that, often as he had watched it, he could never paint it when in motion—a defect which, I believe, was owing to its usually angry aspect as it breaks on his native shores, vexed by the

currents of contending oceans, and his greater sympathy with calm and sunshine, which was so obvious in all he touched, and which, in his treatment of still water, must have been especially expressed.

But whatever his merits were in this direction, and I have heard they were undeniable, that his observation was very faithful and his colour always excellent, it is clear that his tastes and interests carried him more and more to miniature—a class of work which was considerably more popular in Ireland, and for which his predilection gradually grew into a passion. Before, however, I proceed to show this by a sketch of his exertions, I may be allowed to pause a moment upon the claims of the art itself, the more especially when it is remembered that it is now a thing of the past, a something that has been practically, if not entirely, swept away. I scarcely need remind my reader that miniature painting as a pursuit was annihilated by photography.

I confess I am not one of those who are perfectly content with this result. Admitting all the advantages of the latter in respect to cheapness and ease of production, I find it difficult to think that its grim and severe reality, its sudden and unexpected revelation of human ugliness, and its inability to soften it with the faintest gleam of mind or feeling, make it preferable to a process which, in able hands at least, was always capable of giving us sufficient truth of feature, combined with some glow of grace and beauty, and some refining light of soul. There was something

peculiarly attractive in the position held by miniature. Compared with portrait it was entitled to be called a sister art, which, whether in respect to function, ground, or vehicle, had many feminine distinctions. If, of the latter, it must be said that by virtue of the force and depth of oil-colour it has more impressiveness and dignity, whilst in respect to size it has more completeness in its greater inclusion of detail,—the superior brilliancy and delicacy of water-colour, the greater refinement which seemed essential to the tracing of minuter outlines, and the idealizing beauty which had become established as one of its elements,—since it was an axiom it should exclude all the harsher lines and shadings that are proper to the face, gave to miniature a charm with many that was not shared by the robuster portrait.

Miniature, again, in one particular derived a great advantage from its ground—its smooth, unabsorbent ivory, which was such a superior source of brilliancy in its soft and quick diffusion of light. It seemed to acquire, even from its size, its limitation to the face and bust, a more intellectual character, whilst it was peculiarly distinguished by the possession of a function which made it what may be called the favourite auxiliary of the emotions. It was exclusively devoted to the duty of transcribing the looks of dear ones, of those who were loved and prized the most, and which transcripts, as in the case of portraits, did not need to be hung on walls, but could be carried about upon the bosom and worn next to the heart. Its

very name became the synonyme of some lost or cherished treasure ; it was the chosen companion of memory, it was the sweetest comforter of hope.

It is scarcely necessary to say that a production of such a character was tolerably popular in Ireland. That land of warm emotions, of affections ever active, of hearts which fondly consecrate the slightest memorials of beloved ones, could hardly be indifferent to a means which so agreeably supplied them with a favourite enjoyment. The Irish people at this period might be called a miniature-loving family. They were fully sensible of the happiness of possessing portraits which could become companions, which could accompany them in their walks and visits, or be suspended over their mantel-pieces within easy reach of inspection. This was a domestic worship of images which even Protestants engaged in. Miniatures were considered by many of the gentry as an indispensable part of dress. Great sums were often expended in order to obtain them in the minutest form, in sizes sufficiently small to be fitted into rings or the tiniest locket for a necklace. At evening parties they were constantly seen in their little oval frames of gold lying on the necks of wives or mothers, as a piece of domestic jewellery which worthily took the place of diamonds. They were even found on the walls of the poor, rough and coarse as might be their treatment, where they were invariably regarded as the most sacred part of the furniture.

A field of art so popular as this could never at any

period want its due supply of painters, and when Lover entered it, as I have said, it was his good fortune to discover that he had only one competitor of great ability to contend with. That one, however, was a host. Comerford was not only a man of genius, but an artist of the ripest excellence, who throughout a long career had been maturing his distinctions. His insight into character, and therefore expression, were as notable, as his technical capacity was in all respects consummate. He was a model of that refinement which forms the soul of miniature painting—of that aerial sense of beauty, of those delicate restraints of taste which seem to resolve the smaller portrait into its pure poetic essence, and to all these possessions he had added the completest grasp of execution, the cultivation of his hand into the most dexterous of ministers.

By the side of such a man Lover necessarily suffered. He could oppose to him little other than the best qualities of youth, the spontaneousness and freshness which have the charm of great suggestion. He had all the defects that were to be expected from a non-instructed mind, whose natural ardour only augmented the necessity for training, all its exuberance, its wildness, its want of symmetry and balance, all the vigour whose great virtue excess converts into such a vice. His refinement only existed in his undeveloped poetic power, whilst of manipulative skill he had as yet to learn the secret. Nevertheless, with all defects, he had a marked indi-

viduality. His was not the first order of genius, the all-receptive and self-excluding, which mirrors, as in the case of Shakspeare, man and nature in all their forms; his was that lower but ever interesting, often fascinating, class—as witness Rousseau and Byron—which gives as well as receives, and mingles with all it reflects its own temperament and feeling.

No one has ever put more of himself into his work than Samuel Lover. In every talent he exerted we see the man behind the artist. That buoyant sunny spirit which he pours out in song and story, and which, if it diminishes the field of character, gives us so much of it that is enjoyable, was just as plain in his first paintings, in those smiling glowing miniatures which had such a hearty throb of life in them, such a flush of youth and pleasantness. These were always faithful to himself, whatever their truth might be to others, though in one respect, I own, there was much more than this charming egotism. In many of those early portraits there was a simple careless gracefulness, a happy frolic animation, a piquant audacious gaiety, that was something highly national, something of the peasant in his better moments, such as he has painted in his songs, and whose models he must have often met with in his rambles on the Wicklow Hills.

Lover had yet his place to gain. Every artist has his outset of either error or experiment, his plunge into a wrong method or his struggle to reach a right one,

and his good influences under which, at last, he makes his escape in a right direction. Of such influences Lover had several. The earliest, beyond all doubt, was the eminent merit of his friend Comerford. He was the first accomplished painter that the former had encountered, and in the perfection of his taste and workmanship was seen at once a standard of exertion. His pictures became the subject of the most careful and constant study, and the guidance that was thus acquired was very sensibly increased when in addition to the author's acquaintance Lover gained his good advice. Comerford was a liberal genial fellow, who, so far from feeling any jealousy, took the warmest possible interest in the success of his younger brethren; and the ability he perceived in this case, independently of personal liking, must have been quite enough to draw from him his best technical assistance.

Another favouring circumstance was the poetic growth of Lover, a progression which of course imparted a finer influence to his hand; and a third was his introduction to a higher class of society, which brought him daily into contact with a higher state of taste and feeling. The result of all these circumstances was that in the lapse of a few years his style had undergone a change which attracted general attention. It was that of vigour softening into delicacy, buoyancy calming into grace, a special discordant emphasis yielding to a broad harmonious unity. It was a change also in which the touch was not only tenderer, but more significant, in which

emotion had not merely deepened, but intention had enlarged—as in the great merit of expression, where not only its more marking indications were secured, but, with a new and rarer subtlety, the less emphatic thought or feeling that characterized a face, and which, upon the ivory as in the man, was sure to grow upon inspection.

Nor was all this refinement and keener perception gained at any cost of nature. His heads, of whatever character, retained all their old reality, their pleasant frankness and unaffectedness, if a grace almost indefinite floated round them like a gauze which, whilst it forbore to conceal lineaments, rendered expression more engaging. He had also acquired a requisite finish, and a notable mastery of details. He had studied surfaces and textures with the closest observation, and now was enabled to reproduce them with singular exactness. Let me not forget a last distinction—his admirable colour, that great merit of his drawings in their delicate tracings of sea and sky, was not less conspicuous in his treatment of the ever-varying human skin. From the roseate bloom of youth and womanhood, up to the browner hues of maturity, and on to the yellowing tints of age, his colour was still as prominent as faithful, and as delightful. Thus characterized, it is not surprising that his works produced a due impression. They became features in the annual exhibitions of the Royal Hibernian Academy, and at length won him the enjoyment of some of the first patronage of his time. The Marquis of Wellesley, whilst

he was Viceroy, did him the honour of becoming a sitter, and was followed by the Duke of Leinster, Lord Cloncurry, and many other notabilities.

Such was the position as a painter which Lover was at last enabled to assume, a position which left him but one rival, and scarcely a superior in Dublin. Marked, however, as was this advance, it was still in his power to improve it. It was reserved for him to reach another and a yet higher stage of merit, and which, it is gratifying to add, he owed entirely to himself. This was a stage, moreover, that had the novelty of entirely departing from all its artistic antecedents. It was a rise into the sphere of dignity, of a stately and sustained composure, which, together with a richer and more substantial mode of treatment, gave all his pictures of this class an effect appropriate to oil-colour. Gravity and dignity are certainly not the qualities that usually distinguish him, whether in art, music, or literature, and yet on their exceptional character rests his best fame as a painter. Among the earliest pictures of this series was, doubtless the finest he ever produced, his Paganini miniature, painted in 1832; and this was followed shortly afterwards by his likenesses of Lord Brougham, the Indian Moulvie, and many others of note in London, which, also exhibited at the Royal Academy, excited a kindred admiration. Into the merit of these pictures I shall enter in a later page: enough for me now to state that they satisfactorily sustained the highest ordeal of their time in challenging, as they did, comparison with the

works of Ross and Thorburn, and, both by the criticism they endured and the gratification they diffused, succeeded in placing their author's claims on an unquestionable basis.

I have but one remark to add to this brief sketch of his exertions, and my endeavour to show the place he is entitled to take among British artists. Lover's success as a miniature painter was an instance of self-conquest that, perhaps, has never been exceeded. It was a success in which an instinct was able to triumph over temperament. If he was attracted to miniature from sketching because, however he loved the face of nature, he loved still more the face of man; if he was also peculiarly adapted to it by his taste and poetic feeling; if even its limitations in point of form were expressive of a genius which, whether in painting, song, or story, selected the minute, compact, and graceful, rather than the massive and important, we have still got to explain how a man of his ardent and impulsive temperament was capable of the wearying effort which the slow, stippling, dotting process of miniature demands. It is clear that only the intensest and fondest passion for his work could have overcome the sense of its drudgery, and so have utilized the energy which must have been otherwise exhausted. His success then was something more than a defeat of his competitors—it was a defeat of his own tendencies; it was a triumph over himself.

CHAPTER VI.

1818—1825.—The growth of Lover's other Talents—His *début* in Literature—The "Gridiron," his earliest Comic Story—The "Moore Banquet"—His First Appearance as a Song Writer—His Song, "The Poet's Election;" its Origin; its Lines on Southey—Lover's Success in Private Society—The Great Favourite of his Time—His Social Talents and Characteristics—His Popularity in England—The Irish Life of the Past Century a Phenomenon in Modern History—Its Mingled Refinement and Barbarity—Its Feudal Sentiment and Humour—The Model Landlord of the Time; his Carnival Existence; his Duelling and Drinking—Dublin, the Centre of this Peculiar Life—Its Mirth and Eccentricity—Buck Whalley and his Famous Wager—Beauchamp Bagenal, and his Mad Adventures—Its Affairs of Honour and Convivial Excesses—The Darker Features of the Period—The Abduction Clubs, and their Cruelties—The Career of Higgins, the "Sham Squire," Felon, and Magistrate, a Romance of Rascality—The Offset to these Features—Exemplary Landlords and Refined Society—Lord Cloncurry's Eulogy—Distinctions of Irish and Parisian Circles—Humour and Sympathy of the Former—Also Higher Moral Tone—Estimation of Women, &c.—Dublin Life in the Time of Lover—Its Soberer Character and Improvement—Its Increased Taste and Intelligence—Its Elegant Circles—The Lefanus, &c.—Its Surviving Eccentricity—Jones the Sculptor—Butler the Architect—Brophy the Dentist—His Capital Stories—Anecdote of the Marquis of Wellesley—Butler's Paganini—Jones's "Love, Farewell"—Dublin Literary Eccentrics—Richard Shiel and his Recitations—Lady Morgan—Maturin—His Plays and Romances—Strange Habits and Forgetfulness—His Retort on a Practical Joker.

WE have considered Lover in his outset and introduction to the world by means of the special talent which he

selected as his instrument, and the question may now be asked what had become of its companions? Fairly established as a painter, where were the songs, the tales, the dramas which were also a portion of his armoury, and which at one time he expected to wield with quite as much success? Were they all abandoned for a while, that he might master more effectually the weapon he had chosen; thrown aside, as it were, to rust, in order that the favourite might be perfected? Not at all. His daughter tells us that during his preparatory period he managed to cultivate in turn every one of his endowments, and this by means of that faculty which he exerted throughout life, that of making his several gifts serve as reliefs to one another.

When he had become weary of his painting, he would have recourse to his song or story, and so renew his strength for one art whilst improving his skill for its fellow. The result was that he was able to follow up his success with the pencil by making a pleasant *début* in literature, in the shape of tales and legends in the leading Dublin magazines, many of which, when published collectively, obtained him a second fame in England. Among these was the story which first made him known as a humorist, and which individually, as much as anything, has sustained his fame up to this hour—the inimitable “Gridiron.” Read and enjoyed by many thousands in all manner of reprints and issues, it announced to them a new and original explorer of Irish character; it became his favourite recitation for many years in private, and

ultimately formed one of the best features of his entertainments.

His first appearance in print, according to a letter to Mr. Symington, was in the "Dublin Literary Gazette," a journal modelled on that of London, and in which, agreeably to most experience, his contributions were gratuitous. He says, though he omits to name the time of its production, "A paper of mine called 'Ballads and Ballad Singers' was the *premier pas* on that occasion. The French say, '*C'est le premier pas qui coûte*,' but my *premier pas* cost the publisher nothing, at all events. In the same journal appeared, secondly, the legend of 'The King and the Bishop,' and, thirdly, the 'Story of the Gridiron,' which last was a great success, being reprinted in many forms both in England and America." Considering the merit of these efforts, and more especially the latter, the concluding part of his statement must be regarded as the most gratifying—"That was the last thing I wrote for glory; I got paid after that."

Previous to this period, however, was his first appearance as a song-writer. This was at the memorable Moore Banquet, given in 1818. The Bard of Erin, who was then acknowledged not only as the foremost of her songsters, but as one of the most devoted of her sons, was at the height of his popularity, and at this gathering it was expected all the notabilities of the land would meet,—Lord Charlemont being in the chair. A friend of Lover had been able to procure him a ticket for the occasion, and his delight was

so extreme that it inspired the production of a song, which he submitted to his friend, and, as it was written to a popular tune, hoped he himself might be allowed to sing. The subject was a happy one, the election of a Poet Laureate for Olympus, which of course was to be contested by all the leading bards of England, and in which, Venus and the Graces giving plumpers for their favourite, Moore at length was to win the day. The song was thought to be a very good one, but in the face of the talent that would assemble—Shiel, Maturin, O'Connel, Lord Cloncurry, Peter Burrows, and many others—the friend feared that its delivery was scarcely permissible on the part of a youth who was only just emerging into notice.

By some strange oversight, however, nothing poetical or musical had been prepared in honour of the hero, and the evening wearing on and this omission becoming obvious, Lover's friend gave him a nudge (to quote from a pleasant sketch in the "Dublin University Magazine"), and added, "Master Sam, we must have your song after all. I have just heard that your name has been sent up to the chairman; you'll be called upon directly, so clear up your throat, and don't be afraid." Shortly afterwards, sure enough, Lover was requested by Lord Charlemont to contribute to the night's enjoyment, and though terribly flurried by his position, yet, inspired by his "first champagne," he sang with as much voice as fright and anxiety had left him. The effort was most successful; he was loudly applauded and encored, and his effusion had the

further value of drawing from its distinguished object an honourable and brilliant testimony to the bards he had been compared with.

The writer of the sketch referred to omits to say that at the close of the festivity Moore begged to be introduced to the young songster of the night, and in the most flattering terms acknowledged the compliment that had been paid him, thus commencing a pleasant intimacy, that on one occasion only was interrupted to the close of life. The writer adds, however, a fact that is scarcely of less interest, namely that Moore's mother, whose whole soul was bound up in her son's celebrity, finding out on the following day who was the author of the verses, sent to request a copy of them, and thus occasioned another acquaintance which was so friendly and continuous, that at the funeral of Mrs. Moore, Lover was one of the honoured few who were desired to bear the pall.

The song of this occasion was very probably suggested by the old poem of the Duke of Buckingham, "The Election of a Poet Laureate," which was modernized so happily at the beginning of the present century by Leigh Hunt, in his "Feast of the Poets." Written most likely over-night, fitted, as I have said, to a popular tune, with a good ringing kind of chorus, which half the company may have joined in, this convivial effusion was well adapted to its purpose, if, in a literary point of view, it merely augured riper efforts. Its cleverest lines refer to Southey, the then Laureate of England, whose revolutionary outset with his

“Wat Tyler,” &c., had won him immense favour in Ireland, where the Insurrection was preparing, and whose subsequent conversion to high Tory and Anti-Catholic principles had exposed him, of course, to a like measure of invective. I give a few of the verses—there are a dozen altogether—merely as a specimen of their spirit, and of the pleasantry which was already beginning to bubble up in the writer:—

THE POET'S ELECTION.

T'other day Jove exclaimed, with a nod most profound,
While the Gods of Olympus in state sat around,
I have fully resolved, after weighty reflection,
To soon set a-going a Poet's Election.

A good thought,—Jupiter, boy !

For though Momus we have to provide us a 'jest'
Yet a Poet we want, and we must have the best ;
So, as your own satisfaction I wish to promote,
Elect one yourselves—let each God have a vote.

The first who applied for the honour was Scott,
Who the voices of Clio and Euterpe had got.
Campbell next made a claim, to whom Mars gave a vote,
Whilst from bold Hohenlinden many lines he could quote.

Next claiming the place, Southey came into court,
And Somnus soon gave him his warmest support ;
Him quickly the double-faced Janus could scan,
And a plumper he gave for his favourite man.

But Mercury said he should now bring in sight
A Bard who was every one's pride and delight—
Who Melpomene, Venus, Thalia could lure ;
They all knew who he meant, and so need he say—Moore ?

With one acclamation his presence they greet,
Whilst Flora her best treasures lays at his feet ;
Apollo the laurel-wreath placed on his head,
And the rainbow of Iris around it was shed.

But endless 'twould be here to tell all the Gods
Who gave to the Poet their smiles and their nods ;
| And he who from Erin his heart ne'er could sever |
Was duly elected Jove's Poet for ever.

Lover's success in his profession, supported by his amusing *début* in literature, could scarcely fail to have its effect on his position in society. Known only at his outset in the comparatively small circles of his immediate and early friends, his attractive personal qualities, and his talents as a singer and composer, began to widen his acquaintance as he came before the public, till in the course of a few years he was furnished with a passport to the best drawing-rooms in Dublin. The young artist became a lion, though not exactly yet a grown one, who, if he gave no roar himself, by means of his humour soon elicited many hearty ones from others. But a short time had elapsed before he had become what, in my own knowledge, he was always in society, one of the greatest favourites of his day.

Nor is the fact at all surprising. I doubt the being ever existed whom Nature had more richly qualified to become the soul of a social circle. Greater wits have flourished, certainly. He could not compare with the brilliant talkers who had shone in street and assembly

during the course of the previous century—the Currans, Tolers, Bushes, Lysaghts, Barringtons, and others. Nor was his sphere particularly the dinner-table. He had nothing of the *bon-vivant* about him—nothing of the bacchant spirit that requires a vinous aliment to feed it. He was not one of those who at two in the morning could create those hilarious hurricanes that so often used to shake the old dining-rooms of Dublin. There was a refinement about Lover that necessarily extended to his pleasures. His true sphere was the drawing-room, and there he shone because society was, after all, so much the source of the singular vivacity he gave to it. No one could have enjoyed it more than he did. Like Lamb and Dr. Johnson, he had no segregative tendencies. He loved the face and voice of man, and he loved them most when multitudinous. The clash of minds, the ring of laughter, the stir and glow of various sympathy, the song, the jest, the anecdote which could quickly circulate and brighten faces more effectually than could lamps or lustres, were all to him an electric influence which he was never weary of reciprocating. His eager, active spirit made even pleasure an activity.

At the same time it must not be supposed that with all this social appetite his nature was undomestic. Few men, as his life attested, have been happier in their homes than he was, and certainly no one could be capable of stronger personal attachments. But he seemed born for social contact; he had exhaustless animal spirits, a sense

of life, a power of enjoyment, a feeling of the hopeful and the fortunate, which, in English crowds especially, made him as refreshing as a fountain. He had a humour that was the oddest compound of quick perception and broad antithesis; and, again, he had talents musical and dramatic, which were never failing as resources. His stories of Irish character were a perpetual source of laughter; and though, like Moore, he had but little voice, and owed his effect chiefly to expression, his songs were just as sure to hush their hearers into sympathy. Then he was a great man at theatricals; he had quite a genius for charades; and when a celebrated German dance was literally turning the head of every one, Lover was acknowledged in all quarters as one of the best waltzers in Dublin. To all this social mould of spirit, Nature had supplied a fitting frame. He was lightly and neatly built, had the dark grey mirthful eyes so characteristic of his countrymen, good teeth, a kindly mouth, and an open, honest, frank expression.

Little wonder that such a man became a favourite of society. Even in Ireland, where humour and vivacity are so generally diffused, he must have laid many a hospitable roof under signal obligations. In England his enlivening influences it would be hard indeed to over-rate. Granting we were libelled when the old chronicler, many centuries ago, said we English took our pastimes in our own melancholy way, and that we have improved on the past century, when society's animation was owing in so large a measure

to the dice-box and the corkscrew, it will scarcely be disputed that our social gatherings even now have much of the gravity that is more in place at a meeting of grand jurors. Our national reserve and sombreness still cling to us like a bad cold that defies all effect of stimulants. Wit, music, singing, dancing seem to serve but as so much lime-light to make our pensiveness more visible. We assemble to perform the funeral obsequies of sociability, and, as if all this were not enough, we have been so absurd in recent years as to indulge ourselves in the monstrous affectation of exhaustion—we of all people in Europe, who probably enjoy ourselves the least.

To resuscitate a group from its good old Anglo-Saxon torpor, to lift from its soul a weight of dulness which so many think a due propriety, is mostly a labour that needs a Hercules quite as much as it does a Momus. How often Lover achieved it, I can leave with perfect confidence to the testimony of those who met him—to the many or few who, still surviving, can look back some thirty years, and under the pleasant light of his memory revive the faded features of many a jocund evening. I believe that on those occasions he often proved a benefactor, often unburthened a sad heart and won a wan face to a smile, which had not owed the blessing of forgetfulness to far more important sources.

But there is more than Lover's social spirit that tempts a pause of retrospection—there are the circles that he moved in, now some fifty years ago; there is Irish society

itself in all its grace and eccentricity, as it still reflected the sunken light of a very extraordinary age. The descriptions I have given of Dublin within a term of seventy years show some of the stronger aspects of Irish existence in the past century, but there is one of them I left untouched, which to many would be more agreeable, and that is its comic romance or almost passionate absurdity. Taken as a whole, the life of those times must be regarded as a something perfectly unique in modern history. The national character, a mass of extremes held together as it was then by the restraining force of certain instincts, presents barbarity and refinement living amicably side by side. Whilst the peasant vibrates daily between good humour and ferocity, the most fraternal joviality and the most tiger-like combativeness; the educated landlord is able to balance these extremes, or at least to soften their indulgence under an elegant grotesqueness. Drinking and fighting, the savage favourites, loved when naked by the one, become with the other bland barbarians who disport in a shirt and ruffles.

They had, however, other traits in common which were as tender as they were strong. There was their feudal feeling, which exchanged the warmest service and devotion for the readiest pity and protection; there was their humour, which was manifested by high and low alike; and there was the chivalric regard for woman, connected in the peasant with a moral purity that was even more extraordinary, which whilst it refined tastes

on the one hand, half redeemed excesses on the other. Fortune and position, however, were circumstances that stimulated the national character into a great comic diversity. The good old model landlord, who would neither distrain on a tenant nor pay a shilling to a creditor, may be accepted as a fair type of it. An air of burlesque romance runs through half this people's history. They seem to turn life into a carnival in which the only occupation is the concoction of a good joke or the pursuit of a mad adventure.

Even misfortune does not sadden them. Out of the worst of their embarrassments they can draw excitement and diversion. Entrenched on their estates with a body-guard of gamekeepers, how innumerable are the schemes with which they can circumvent a lawyer or castigate a bailiff. Their love of fun is so irrepressible that even their duelling and drinking demand the relish of absurdity. What bacchanals before their day could pretend to such an institution as a Five Bottle Club, of which the president on all occasions of visitors or neophytes locked the door of the room, and threw the key out of the window? Where else were judicial dignity and deliberation so secured as when a chairman of Quarter Sessions could boast that he had put all his brother magistrates under the table; or, if we turn to affairs of honour, in what other land or time should we hear of a host being found at pistol practice because he expected some friends to dinner; of a plaintiff who had called out all his

opponents in a lawsuit ; or politicians, ministers of state, and even judges on the bench, who maintained public respect by their repeated shots at one another? Sir Jonah Barrington, who has supplied us with so many details upon the point, has only seemed incredible because he was so true.

Of all this curious and amazing mixture of humour and extravagance, this unparalleled defiance of all prescriptions and proprieties, Dublin, of course, became the centre. The seat of the legislature, and moreover the focus of fashion, law, and commerce, could scarcely fulfil its ends without the aid of mirth and drollery. Its bar always presented some of the first wits of the time, but in addition it converged all the exuberant spirits of the land, all the talkers and the schemers; the *bon-vivants* and bacchanals; the "gentlemen every inch of them," and the "gentlemen to the backbone," who had run through all their property or mortgaged it to half its value ; the clever dogs who lived by their brains, and the worthy fellows who had crazed them. It was the home of hospitality, the imperial mint of jest and epigram ; the great fountain-head or factory of everything that was droll or rampant in speech, literature, or action.

Eccentricity was not only the spirit, it became the business of men's lives. To supply Dublin with fresh laughter seemed just as needful as fresh food. Thus the most absurd wagers were laid and the wildest adventures were undertaken. There was Buck Whalley's famous bet,

to walk to Jerusalem and back, and play a game of racquet against its walls; and there were all the extraordinary exploits of that human firework, Beauchamp Bagenal, the man who fought a Royal Duke, who courted an Infanta, who intoxicated a Doge of Venice, and carried off a nun from an Italian convent. Dublin was not only the most festive and recklessly expensive city of the day, it was pre-eminently the most hilarious. At the same time, it will be supposed that it was tolerably combustible, and under the friendliest impinging of its warm ingredients had occasional explosions. Duelling was one of its necessities, though it is only proper to remark that an affair of honour in those days was in so few instances fatal, was always conducted with such fairness, and, moreover, was so often ludicrous, either in its origin or ending, that it must be regarded rather in the light of an extravagance than a brutality.

The professed "fire-eaters," as they were termed, the old notorious "hilt and muzzle boys," the Crow Ryans, Reddy Longs, Amby Bodkins, and their fellows, who loved gunpowder so much that their rule in all ambiguous cases was to fire first and explain afterwards, were not so numerous in Dublin. Neither towards the close of the century was fighting there acknowledged as a portion of polite usage. It was not a ground of admission to society, as it had been in previous years, when a young man could not expect to go to a dinner party or a ball but the question was sure to be asked, "Have you been out yet?"

have you blazed, sir?" Certainly, in a particular direction the practice was thought to have its advantages—it cancelled debts between gentlemen, and put a stop to lawsuits. The "trigger process," as it was called, always set aside the legal. Irish convivial habits, however, retained all their old excess. Though the bacchanalian standard had been reduced from five bottles to three (the rule was two bottles of claret and one of old port—"to assist"), there was still the unhappy shrub-drinking which prevailed throughout the day, and the potent and insidious whiskey that invariably came at night, and which, under the plea of correcting acids, carried gout into the legs of every third man in the community.

Such, for many years in Ireland, was that extraordinary state of society which I cannot help considering as something unique in modern history. I am well aware it has its darker features—its "abduction clubs," for instance—associations of ruined rascals who drew lots for girls of fortune, and carried them off in open day; acts of savagery whose heinousness is not softened by the absurdity of the abductor usually placing the girl before him on the horse in order that he might plead it was she who abducted him! Even the career of such a scoundrel as Higgins, the "sham Squire," so well recounted by Mr. Fitzpatrick—the shoe-black and the felon, who by means of every infamy rose to be a magistrate and sub-sheriff, and the friend of a Lord Chancellor and a Viceroy—defiles the society that harboured him quite as much as it does himself. The romance

of his rascality cannot blind us to its success. And there were other shadows of this period, but still it is pleasant to remember that side by side with them existed many relieving gleams of goodness.

If there were landlords who passed their lives in warring with creditors and lawyers, and in exhausting every faculty but the love of claret and a cock-pit, there were others who were just as conscious of their duties and their dignity, and who could unite the highest principle to the heartiest enjoyment. Or, if there were fashionable maniacs who could race each other to ruin with the wildest riot of profusion, and the vainest blazon of display, there were many who were as distinguished by their culture and refinement, who carried the pleasures of social intercourse up to a level which it is probable has never been surpassed. Lord Cloncurry, whose authority is one of the highest upon the point, says that Dublin, in 1797, possessed society as polished and brilliant as that of Paris in its best days—circles whose gaiety and freedom had all the restraints of a high respect, and whose festive spirit all the submission that was exacted by good taste.*

I would even venture to assert that in many respects these circles were superior to those of France. They had the advantage of a temperament that was most conducive to enjoyment, and of a national humour which, when refined, was so well adapted to promote it. In pure conversational brilliancy, of course, Paris was pre-eminent.

* "Personal Recollections," p. 217.

Wit and fancy were the distinctions that had crowned its coteries for centuries, but there was the drawback that they were too often merely tournaments of cleverness, in which the gifted and accomplished only tilted to obtain a victory. In Ireland, on the contrary, where humour rather than wit produced more emotion and more sympathy, there was a spontaneousness and heartiness, a throwing of the soul into the matter, that stifled all egotism in the general gratification. Nor must we forget either the higher moral tone of her *réunions*, the ease and freedom that were not purchased by any compromise of woman. As pure and estimable as they were ardent, the fair idols of Hibernia could always command a homage that was as full of reverence as admiration.

I have lingered on this retrospect, not merely because it is that of an extraordinary time, the more interesting perhaps that it has entirely passed away, but because it is the period in which Lover lays his tales and novels, and which he describes with all his power from his own point of view. In his "Handy Andy," especially, the pure humour of this era has been reflected, it will be found, with no ordinary felicity. If the age therefore in which he lived was of a much soberer and calmer character, one that retained but a dying gleam of the old exuberant vivacity, it could boast of the advantage of many beneficial changes. If Dublin had lost her legislature, and for many years her commercial welfare, she had also in a great measure got rid of her duelling and drinking. Personal

honour was no longer felt to be dependant upon gunpowder, nor a dinner regarded in the light of a night's riot or an orgie.

Taste and intelligence had increased, society in general had raised its level, whilst under many roofs in Dublin a steady flow of genial intercourse, fed from many refining sources, had caught something of the charm and spirit of the higher circles I have referred to. Not the least distinguished of these assemblies was convened by the Lefanus—a name consecrated to wit and pleasantry by its connection with that of Sheridan—at which Lover was a constant visitor, and of whose attractions he has given a description in a letter to a friend, which could scarcely be exceeded in its felicitous compactness. “These were *réunions*,” he says, “that could be intellectual without being blue, could be fashionable without being insipid—an admirable admixture of high breeding and ability, in which, if Minerva was enthroned, she was always attired by the Graces.”

Still, though Dublin in Lover's days had acquired a comparative sobriety, it must not be supposed she had entirely lost her spirit. If her Buck Whalleys and her Beauchamp Bagenals had taken their departure (Buckism, once identical with outrage, melting at last into a term for oddity), together with her carousings and her combatings, her hoaxings and her wagerings, she still retained, as I have said, a dying gleam of eccentricity. There must be many who can yet remember those disciples of Democritus

who, some forty years ago, daily enlivened her with their doings as well as their songs and recitations, among whom I may be allowed to name Jones the sculptor, Butler the architect, and, above all, that facetious genius the exhilarating Brophy. Professionally a dentist, he was just as famous for extracting his clients' laughter as their teeth, and certainly was bound to embellish the jaws he was so constantly distending.

His "Blind Beggar of Carlisle Bridge," known in Dublin by the name of Zosimus, was a notable achievement, and so also was his "King of the Carmen;" but a living acquaintance has put on record (in the "Temple Bar Magazine," August, 1868) an evidence of his powers amounting to a case of medical efficiency, which, however irregular, is so agreeable, that one cannot help wishing such a resource were more extensive. The Marquis of Anglesea was a martyr to *tic douloureux*, and whenever suffering severely, he always sent for the diverting dentist, who, instead of attending to the malady, attacked his patient's imagination by regaling him with his Zosimus, or some other facetious story, and the result was he was always able to leave the delighted Viceroy as free from pain and as ready for dinner as he had ever felt in his whole existence. Butler the architect was chiefly noted for his clever caricature of Paganini, in which, after twisting himself into some personal resemblance of the great musician, he imitated very wonderfully his peculiar tones upon one string, whilst he bowed and fingered in the manner of his model on an imaginary fiddle.

The other member of the group was the more versatile of the three, but was chiefly distinguished by his spirited delivery of the old Irish trooper's song, "Love, farewell," a great favourite in the capital, of which a Latin metrical translation from the pen of Father Prout was published in "Bentley's Miscellany" some twenty years ago. All of these for a certain period were Lover's rivals in the pleasant task of entertaining in private the sympathetic Dublin public, but they were by no means his superiors. They had all a hearty native humour, and a flood of animal spirits, but they were not exempt from a certain coarseness, could become at times a little tedious, and were more in their element at dinner or supper parties, than in the more refined assemblies of the day.

Dublin had other eccentric beings who contributed to ripple society's surface at this period,—beings with brains as strangely wayward as their hearts were sound and generous, and whom Lover was accustomed to meet with in all literary circles. Among these, up to a certain time, I may venture to instance Richard Shiel, who, though then prominently engaged in the Emancipation movement, had commenced life with supplying, in his *Evadne* and *Apostate*, successful tragic heroines to his gifted countrywoman, Miss O'Niel. Still faithful to his first love, he mingled poetry with politics—a new scene for the stage with a new speech for the Rotunda, and was only too delighted when, after the vigorous delivery of the one, he could swing back to the other, and among his friends at night pour out in his

piercing tones, amounting to a prolonged scream, the woes and ardours of his lovers, till every ear, if not each heart¹ fairly succumbed to his ability.

Then, again, there was Lady Morgan, with her irrepressible vivacity, her humour that indulged in the most audacious illustrations, and her candour, which had small respect for time or place in its expression ; and who, by the side of her tranquil, steady, contemplative husband, suggested the notion of a Barbary colt harnessed to a patient English draught horse. And, still more notably, there was Maturin—clergyman, novelist, and dramatist—with his wild and daring fancy and his strange erratic habits, and yet whose traits, however marked, could never obscure, to those who knew him, the loving and exemplary character of the pastor and the man. Whatever may be thought of his plays, beyond the distinction of his “*Bertram*” having provided Edmund Kean with his only great original character, I feel sure that a future age will do full justice to his romances, which carried the Radclyffe school of writing out of the region of mere sensation, up to the height and force of poetry. In his “*Melmoth*,” especially, there are pictures of the beautiful and terrible, which I doubt are to be matched in the whole range of modern fiction.

But Maturin had his eccentricities, which seem to be the eruptive malady to which ideal natures are liable. During his throes of composition he would paste a wafer on his forehead as an intimation to his household that he was not to be interrupted ; and when a play had been

successful, he would consider himself for a time the tragic muse, and receive the congratulations of his friends upon a raised seat under a canopy. He was also strangely forgetful. He had been known to make a call in his morning gown and slippers. He was proverbial for going to parties the day after their occurrence; and once he invited a friend to dinner, and kept him talking till the fish had been full an hour on the table—his famishing guest all the while being too polite to apprise him of the tantalizing fact. In those great days of practical joking, he had often to pay the penalty of so dangerous a habit; but a story is told of the way in which he once escaped the trap prepared for him, that redounds so highly to his credit, it deserves to be repeated.

A friend calling on him one Sunday morning as he was about to proceed to his duties, saw his sermon lying loose in its black cover on the table, and on Maturin leaving the room an instant, he was induced to extract the sermon from its cover and replace it with a pamphlet he was carrying in his pocket, taking his leave directly afterwards, and then proceeding to the church in order to witness the result of his cruel and unbecoming joke. His victim, as he expected, never looking at the contents of his cover till he unfolded it in the pulpit, stood aghast for the moment at a discovery he had so little dreamed of; but regaining his composure, selected for his text the applicable words from the parable of the tares—"An enemy hath done this," whereupon he proceeded to consider the subject

of personal wrongs in general, and the temptations to revenge them, comparing the latter with the higher and more enduring consolations which reward the duty of forgiveness, and thus, whilst giving his flock a thoroughly practical discourse, bestowed on his friend, who, he was quite sure, was present, a castigation that was not the less penetrating because it was so tender. It is pleasant to add that his retort did not lose its due effect, but wrung from its object an apology that was as prompt as it was sincere.

CHAPTER V.

1825—1827.—*Lover's Merits as a Song-Writer—Characteristics of his Genius—History and Nationality of Songs—Their Uses, personal and public—Position of the Song-Writer—A Burns, a Moore, &c.—Lover's Place amidst Modern Minstrels—Like Moore, a "Songster of Society"—His Lyrics of Irish Peasant Life—Their Aim; to vindicate the Peasant, and conciliate English sympathy—The Lyric Literature of Ireland—Its Marked Peculiarities—Prolonged Use of the Native Tongue—Deficiency of Ballads—Their Earliest Specimens—Tickell's *Colin and Lucy*, &c.—Parnell and Goldsmith—Modern Anglo-Irish Writers—The True Authors of the Irish Ballad: Griffin, Calanan, &c.—Ferguson's "Forging of the Anchor"—The Songs of Ireland all National—Originating with the Bards—Their few Remains—Carolan, the Irish Anacreon; the last true Bard of Ireland—His Successors, the Hedge Schoolmasters—Owen Roe O'Sullivan, &c.—The classes of Irish Songs, and the proportion found in the Gaelic—The old Irish Peasants' Love Song, *Molly Astore*, &c.—Carolan's Songs of Society, *Gracey Nugent*, &c.—The Bacchanalian Lyrics—Their wild Festivity, Carolan's especially—His *Planxty Stafford*, *Planxty Peyton*, &c.—Explanation of their Ardour—The Jacobite Songs of Ireland—Their Contrast to those of the Scotch—The *Fair Hills of Ireland*, the *Shane Bui*, &c.—The Orange Songs of Ireland—Earliest Specimen—*Lilliburlero*, its vulgar Doggerel, yet reputed Influence—Better Specimens eventually—Col. Blacker's *Battle of the Boyne*—Lyrics of the Volunteer Movement—Lysaght's *Our Island*, and Eulogy on Grattan—Songs of the Insurrection—Dr. Drennan's *When Erin first rose*—Moore's Melodies—An Epoch in the National Minstrelsy—Their Characteristics—The true Song-Writers of Ireland: Griffin, Davis, Calanan, Waller, Lover, &c.—Their Power and their Variety—Deficiencies in Irish Song—Nothing Pastoral, little Sporting, and nothing Military or Naval—The *Boatman's Hymn*—The Comic Song of Ireland the youngest of its progeny, and why—Earliest Specimens in the Last*

Century: *Garry Owen* and the *Rakes of Mallow*, the *Sprig of Shillelagh*, *The Boys of Kilkenny*, &c.—English Counterfeits and Caricatures—Irish Humour owing to Irish Drink—Pat, a Reprobate or Savage—The Slang Songs of Ireland—Lover's disgust at the popular Favourites, and resolve to neutralize their Influence—His prompter, Lady Morgan—*Rory O'More*, the establishment of a new School of Comic Love Song—Its great Success in union with its Air—A previous *Rory O'More* indited by Dr. Drennan—Lover's group of Comic Love Songs Hibernian to the Core, and the true basis of his Lyric fame—Their probable Fulfilment of his Aim—Specimens of their Humour and Feeling: *Molly Carew*, *The Widow Machree*, *Live in My Heart and Pay no Rent*, *Kitty Maclure*, &c.

LOVER'S next great impression on the Irish public was as a song-writer. It is scarcely necessary to say that it was in this delightful capacity he won all his laurels as a poet. Out of his three hundred published pieces, two hundred and sixty-three are songs. His only larger compositions are his three metrical tales, which are, in fact, romantic ballads of a serio-comic character; his metrical fantasy, *The Dewdrop*, and his humorous effusion, *The Maiden's Masque* (we can scarcely include his imitations), none of which, with all their merit, had any share in making his fame. Nor is the fact at all surprising. His limitation to lyric verse was one of the prescriptions of a genius graceful, fanciful, and tender, which to abundant humour and vivacity added a tendency to the terse and epigrammatic in expression, that gave to everything he produced great compactness, if in addition a certain slightness of dimension.

Thus his sphere, as I have said already, lay in the minute, refined, and agreeable, rather than the broad, intense, or dignified; in the just conception and finished setting of one or a few happy ideas, rather than in the

grouping or elaborating of many ingenious or grand ones. His gay, elastic spirit scaled no heights of imagination, sounded no depths of passionate emotion, was no Alpine climber of the mind, conquering summits from which to gaze on worlds of majesty or beauty; it was rather the sportive wanderer beside the beaten tracks of life, amidst meadows ever verdant, and under skies that were always smiling. Accordingly we find that, in the drama, Lover was the author of witty and agreeable, rather than large or important pieces; in fiction, with but few exceptions, he gave birth to tales and legends; in art, he painted miniatures; in poetry, he wrote songs.

Songs, however, it must be remembered, lightly at times as we are inclined to value them, have their place in human history. Coeval with man's childhood, they were the companions of his growth, and it is to their music he has marched out of the shadows of antiquity. More than anything, perhaps, they have served to denote his nationality. Of all a people's characteristics, what are so striking as their songs? Patriotic, bacchanalian, amatory, or martial, they spring from all that is deepest and strongest in the emotions of a race, coloured by all that is most distinctive in its records and traditions. If they come to us from its peasantry, they convey the national feelings in all their vigour and simplicity; if we owe them to its society, they give those feelings under the influence of the national culture and refinement.

And whilst so venerable in their origin, how beneficent

have been their uses. If they may not claim a place in the highest class of a country's literature, how often have they fulfilled some of the highest and noblest ends. We may demur, perhaps, to the saying of the patriotic Scot, that so he might write a people's ballads he cared not who should make their laws—a remark which could only apply to a very early stage of society; but who would underrate the value of the especial voice of our affinities, the chosen minister of the affections; the song that can do so much for our individual joy and good, and still keep strong in us the ties of our universal kindred—that can stir a nation's pulse in all the great crises of its history, and yet along life's daily path help the humblest to support his burthens?

The song-writer, then, is one who discharges a task of some importance. He can sway or sustain our feelings when graver agencies would fail us, and by a means whose very simplicity makes its influence more complete. Thus a Burns, the peasant songster, can master the hearts of multitudes with the warmth, the strength, the naturalness of his passion, or his pathos; thus a Moore, the songster of society, can thrill as deeply cultured natures with a tenderness and fancy, touched with the last graces of refinement; thus a Béranger, gayest, wittiest, freest, staunchest of patriot songsters, can respond to every mood and almost memory of an ardent people; and thus a Körner or an Arndt, burning at a long-borne degradation, can call, as with a trumpet, on a prostrate race to rise.

All these men stand out pre-eminent; they had each their work allotted to them, and they did it with an excellence that is not likely to be surpassed. But the field of each was ample; there was still room for others to follow who could partake a portion of their power, and diffuse, in some degree, their influence; and amidst a group so meritorious, where, it may be asked, is the place of Lover? His is also the sphere of Moore—the world of taste and cultivation, the inner and calmer region of refined and suave society, which, mostly inspired by, he has reflected in many graceful compositions; and if it was not the only world he sung of, if there was also that of peasant life, it was because the latter became the object of a highly honourable aim. It was the greatest triumph of Moore that his enchanting melodies had the effect of attracting sympathy to Ireland when England, still engaged in an exhausting foreign struggle, was most indifferent to her cries; and I think it may be said of Lover, that he sought to direct this awakened feeling to the quarter of all others which required its influence the most—that of the derided Irish peasant.

National prejudice had so long encrusted him with vulgarity and coarseness; had so distorted and besmirched him by successive caricatures; had shown him to be so drunken and so brutal, in a stream of songs, stories, and farces, which, putting occasional excesses in the light of fixed and ordinary habits, made his gaiety as disgusting as his fury was appalling—that English society had only been

able to enjoy his humour under restraint, and could not avoid being repelled from him even when it was most diverted. If it was impossible not to laugh at him, it was just as difficult to like him ; he was quite as much a butt for sarcasm as he was a prime source of hilarity.

Such an unjust impression as this could not fail to revolt Lover, who knew that if the peasant class had not improved in the degree of others, it had much less of the vice and grossness that were common to the past century ; less of that barbarity, the melancholy legacy of misery and ignorance, which drink could so readily kindle, and wrong so much exasperate. Poor Pat, he knew, was possessed of a far more reasonable and amenable nature than his detractors had ever allowed him, a spirit more affectionate, a gaiety more capable of being amusing without coarseness, and buoyant without uproar ; and thus convinced, he also felt that if this truer picture of the man could be shown in a series of songs adapted to popular national airs, or other music as appropriate, and addressed to the taste and sympathy of good society, Irish and English, it would not only supply its hearers with a new and welcome entertainment, but possibly awaken in English circles a kindlier feeling towards a class which they had so little understood, and so imperfectly been pleased with.

Lover, of course, in such a scheme could not present the entire man. The peasant had a passionate and tragic side which lay beyond our poet's reach—he could only

show him as he felt and liked him, and as he believed others would like him also, if they could only grow familiar with his gayer and better nature. Thus originated that class of songs by which he is so worthily distinguished, that group of compositions which has such a stamp of nationality—those lyrics of love and humour, which in their union with grace and tenderness are so unique in modern literature, and which, just as delightful as they are original, are recommended by the further merit that, agreeably to their design, they must have conciliated and interested almost as many as they have amused.

Ireland, known throughout the past as the land of song as well as of sages, has, of course, a lyric literature as old as that of other countries, but it is one that is also characterized by some marked peculiarities. In the first place, it has descended in its native tongue, the Gaelic, to the beginning of the present century; and secondly, it may claim the praise of being pre-eminently lyric, since it is so largely composed of songs, or emotional verses set to music, and so little, if at all, of ballads, or metrical narratives and descriptions, which, originally chanted to a recitative, came in time to be recited. Mr. Hardiman, who is entitled to be called the Irish "Percy," has put this point beyond dispute. In his admirable collection of Gaelic poetry, the most extensive that has yet been made, and which has the further merit of being excellently translated by his colleagues, there is not a ballad to be found. Ballads, in the musical sense of the term—simple

songs of a single movement—and odes, or elaborate songs, in various metres to various movements, together with elegies and laments, or brief passionate valedictions, are numerous in this collection; but not one instance, that I can see, of that veritable metrical narrative, heroic or historical, which so much distinguishes the early literature of Spain, England, France and Germany.

It is as though the people were so musical they cared for nothing they could not sing. It sounds something like a Bull to say that the earliest Irish ballads were contributed by Englishmen. They were introduced by Addison and Tickell in their romantic and pastoral forms, when these writers visited Ireland at the beginning of the past century; but, though native in scenes and incidents, they were purely English in feeling and expression, as their best remembered specimen, the *Colin and Lucy* of Tickell, clearly shows. Oddly enough, however, the ballads of Irishmen were just as English as the earliest. Parnell and Goldsmith, the next in time, in their once popular *Hermit*, and *Edwin and Angelina*, can scarcely be said to exhibit a single feature that is Hibernian. The same character attaches to the writings of Dermody and Mrs. Tighe.

It was reserved for the present century and its group of gifted children, its band of bards and novelists, who have been called its Anglo-Irish writers, to bestow on Ireland a title to the merit of ballad poetry—to show how triumphantly native themes could be illustrated with all the

fervour and the fancy of a Celtic temperament, all the vividness of local colouring, and all the reality and verisimilitude of idiomatic phraseology. Amidst the ample store supplied by Mr. Edward Hayes' excellent collection, and also that of Gavan Duffy, I have only need to refer to four such striking specimens as Griffin's *Bridal of Malahide*, McGhee's *Death of Art M'Murrough*, Macarthy's *Clan Maccaura*, and Williams's *Pass of Plumes* as instances of ballad poetry, not only distinguished by some of the most striking and enkindling traits of the national mind, but by an affluence of power and beauty which may challenge comparison with anything of their class in modern writing. I doubtless ought to add to these the charming *Forester's Complaint* and *Una Phelimy* of Ferguson, a perfect master of this class of verse, but who is best known to the English public by his *Forging of the Anchor*—a ballad of such an extraordinary mingling of force and picturesqueness, that, though it cannot be said in strictness to have any national distinction, it may claim the scarcely inferior honour of being worthy of the hand of Schiller.

The songs of Ireland, on the contrary, have invariably been national—amatory, or bacchanalian, social, Jacobite, or patriotic—the true beating of a Celtic pulse is to be felt in every one of them. They abounded in the Gaelic. The bards who were their chief contributors, as well as the composers of their airs, were surprisingly prolific. The well-known Carolan is said to have written as many as two hundred,

and Connellan, a minstrel of the seventeenth century, almost four times that amount. Unfortunately as the harpers laboured to sustain the national spirit, they were hated and hunted by their rulers,—“a priest, a bard, and a wolf” being among the field sports, I am afraid, of too many English governments. Thus but few of their songs survived them. Even of Carolan, who died as late as 1737, Mr. Hardiman has only been able to collect a couple of dozen specimens, and of earlier writers a similar number, though there were probably many thousands embalming the emotions of remote ages, the loss of which may be easily estimated by the merits of those preserved.

Carolan, who must be regarded as the last true bard of Ireland, in his union of the fourfold avocation of his race,—poet, composer, harper, and singer—has but little of their ruling spirit: he is more festive than patriotic, and might be called the Irish Anacreon, but that he addresses woman with a purity and his bottle with an enthusiasm that are but little shared by the Teian poet. Welcome alike to hall and cottage, he spent his days in cheering their inmates with his love-songs and his planxties, and doubtless did so all the more in being himself the happiest harper who was ever repaid the loss of sight by the felicities of sound. His successors were simply poets, who were forced to conceal in Gaelic the heat of their Jacobite devotion. They were most of them hedge schoolmasters, whose poverty tested their loyalty with no ordinary exactions. Owen Roe O'Sullivan, who

was a ripe classical scholar, had to add potato digging to teaching ; yet this ragged son of Apollo, whether drudging in a furrow or under a hedge without a dinner, could still call upon his countrymen to bear in mind the Stuarts.*

But it may be interesting to observe what are the classes of Irish songs, and, down to the middle of the past century, what was the proportion they owed to the Gaelic. The native tongue seems to have anticipated nearly every modern lyric variety. It has given us in the first place almost the model of the peasant's love song. Not only the well-known favourites, *Eileen Aroon* and *Molly Astore*, that still linger like good spirits in many a lonely mountain cabin, but the *Coolin*, the *Paistheen Fion*, *Catherine Tyrrel*, the *Brown Thorn*, *Honour of the Amber Locks*, and many others, are all charming little utterances full of tenderness and purity, steeped in all the true simplicity that springs from deep emotion, an emotion that is none the shallower if it sparkles at times with sprightliness. The Gaelic also, in those of Carolan, gives us the love songs of good society. His Gracey Nugents, Mabel Kelleys, Peggy Corcorans, and other idols, were all cultivated beauties whom he addressed with a certain gracefulness that would have been lost on vulgar ears. Still his genius is truly national, it has all the gaiety as well as tenderness that is distinctive of his race ; and in his *Shane Glas*, especially, he presents us with a picture of a rustic rover, which, whether in its playfulness or vividness, has never been exceeded.

* Daly's "Reliques of Jacobite Poetry."

But the most notable feature of the Gaelic is its bacchanalian lyrics. I greatly doubt if they have their counterpart in any other ancient tongue. There is no approach to them in the Greek, as far as Anacreon is the standard; and still less in graver Latin, till we reach the Middle Ages and the jovial confession of Father Mapes. They have such a passion of enjoyment, such a transport or rather riot of irresistible festivity, such an open, candid, hearty glorification of the bottle, that their wild fervour serves to veil much of the grossness of their indulgence, and almost to kindle sympathy whilst abjuring and wounding taste. True, the well-known *Cruiskeen Lawn* is scarcely to be cited as an instance; here a quiet, dreamy ecstacy take the place of a mad exuberance; nor may we include that singular production, the *Why, Liquor of Life*, in which the consolations of the cup are dashed with such a remorseful, if unavailing, sense of their cost; but as respects the other specimens, and those of Carolan especially,—his “Whiskey is my Potion,” his “Planxty Stafford,” “Planxty Peyton,” “George Brabazon,” and others, together with “Maggy Laidir”—that marvellous picture of a carousal, the capital “Bumper Squire Jones,” and last, not least, “O’Ruark’s Feast,” with which Swift has made us familiar,—where are we to find in modern writing any such tumultuous felicity?

The gay, convivial Béranger grows composed beside these transports, and the heartiest roar of Robert Burns sinks into a sort of festive murmur. Something of their vigour is due to temperament; something more, perhaps, to

their liquor, which beyond all power of wine sends the soul whirling into the air as if the impulse were volcanic; and something also to their times, when in the delirium of these festivities the vehement spirits of many a Catholic found their sole means of escape. Such hours, through many centuries, were the only national rebound. The Gaelic contribution closes with the "Jacobite songs" of Ireland, which, unlike those of the Scotch, are either deeply mournful and despairing, as in the *Lament for the Queen* and *The Fair Hills of Ireland*, or fiercely vindictive and defiant, as in the *Shane Bui* and "Canticle of Deliverance." The Highland strains, however, if they are more hopeful and magnanimous, and seem to put away vindictiveness in the assurance of success, it is because to the Scotch the Stuart is a reality—he has been once upon their shore, and they feel sure he will come again; whilst to the Irish he is little other than a venerable abstraction, vaguely identified in some way with the independence of their race.

But if Ireland has her Jacobite, she has also her Orange minstrelsy, which, we must remember, has the distinction of being among the very earliest of her songs that appeared in English. In every form of lay and ballad, squib, epigram, and satire they poured out at the Revolution to increase the triumph of the victors and the shame of the defeated, till the wretched condition of the country, which was the first result of the great change, roused the indignant spirit of Swift to oppose patriotism to party feeling. The most celebrated of these effusions came direct from

the Viceregal Court, and yet one would think had been picked from the muddiest of Dublin gutters. This is that amazing piece of doggrel, as grossly vulgar as it is dull—the once famous *Lilliburlero*, the production of Lord Wharton, with which he boasted he had rhymed James II. out of Ireland, and which Bishop Percy actually believed had a main share in the Stuarts' defeat. "Revolutions are not made with rose-water," exclaimed Tallien, a century afterwards ; but it is clear they could be made with ditch-water, were the worthy Bishop in the right.

Far more reputable lyrics than this sustained the Orange cause eventually—songs that, rising to a becoming manhood, flung aside their early arrogance, and indulged their exultations without any flavouring of contempt; among which may be instanced Col. Blacker's *Battle of the Boyne*, founded on the old ballad of the *Boyne Water*, and even the riotous hilarity of the well-known *Protestant Boys*. Later on, the Volunteer movement caused by a threatened French invasion, one would think, must have become a copious spring of Irish minstrelsy—worthily supported as it was by Catholic and Protestant alike ; and yet it gave birth to very little, its most notable productions being those of Edward Lysaght in his patriotic strain *Our Ireland*, and still better in his spirit-stirring eulogy on Grattan, *The Man that led the Van of the Irish Volunteers*.

The century closed with the Insurrection, which of course, among its many stimuli, was not wanting in a stream

of song. Its principal contributors were James Orr, the brothers Shears, G. N. Reynolds and Dr. Drennan—names that are now almost forgotten, and of which the latter were the more eminent—Reynolds as the writer of *Kathleen O'More*, one of the most exquisitely simple and pathetic of all the peasant songs of Ireland; and Dr. Drennan as the author of the most poetic product of his cause, *When Erin first rose*, a song which as clearly indicates the fiery spirit of the time as it does the power of the writer. The more popular effusions of the day, the *Shan van Voght* and *Up with the Green*, have little literary superiority to the mass of their companions that were published in Belfast under the title of "Paddy's Resource."

With the opening of the present century we arrive at what composes an epoch in the national minstrelsy, the *Irish Melodies* of Moore. A group of lyrics which have been so long and firmly established in public favour it would indeed be very superfluous to discuss in the present day; all I could do was to endeavour to epitomize them, when I called their writer the songster of society, of whom, 'midst all his great distinctions, refinement is the chief. It is the grace and delicacy of his love songs which, moulding their fancy and tenderness to such perfection of expression, have made them what they must ever be, the great favourites of cultured circles; and if he rose to the truer ardour and simplicity of passion in those patriotic verses which contrast so much with their companions, it is the prior qualities again which give to his

bacchanalian lyrics such a marked originality. The very reverse of those of the Gaelic, and, indeed, of all others of their class, they derive no inspiration from the wine-cup which they glorify; pure products of the imagination, they discard the aid of stimulants, whilst they celebrate its influence, as a means of defying the flight of time and the evanescence of human pleasures.

A few years later in the century and we come to that group of writers, which can claim to have bestowed on Ireland her national songs as well as ballads. We meet with Griffin, Calanan, Ferguson, Davis, Waller, Walsh, and Lover, M'Ghee, Macarthy, Williams, and Simmons, who with such variety of power have laid bare the Irish heart in all its sunshine and its shadow, its passion and its humour. It is to them we are indebted for those admirable translations which have unlocked for us the stores of grandeur and beauty in the Gaelic; it is they who have given us the truest models of that sweet composite—the Irish love song, in all its tender minglings of apparent contrasts but deep affinities, the smiles and tears, the lights and cloudings of affections pure and steadfast as they are generous and vehement—such as enchant us in Griffin's *Aileen Aroon*, and still lovelier *Gilly Machree*. It is they who furnish us, in addition to the peasant songs of Lover, with such rustic truth and graphic vivacity as Waller's *Song of the Spinning Wheel*, and still better, his *Dance light, Love*. And it is they whose patriotic ardour revives the old soul of the Gael, till at times it might be

thought fiery enough to kindle that of the Saxon, as in Clarence Mangan's *National Hymn*, Gavan Duffy's *Irish Chiefs*, and Davis's *Song of the Volunteers*.

Such is a brief view of the varieties and, I think I may be allowed to add, of the abundance of the songs of Ireland, the larger proportion of which are so little known to English readers. Of course the list has its deficiencies. There are no pastoral songs to be found in it. Whether the times were always too unsettled or the climate was too rainy, we find no trace of a Corydon or Thyrsis among the bards of the Green Isle. There are few sporting songs in Ireland, though its middle and southern quarters have been such a famous sporting country. *The Kilruddery Hunt* and *The Jolly Foxhunters*, written at the close of the past century, are the only specimens I know of; specimens, however, be it said, whose headlong animation and uproarious enjoyment do every justice to the soil.

Military songs are also wanting till we come to those of Lever, which with all their stirring pleasantry are rather convivial than martial; and naval songs are just as absent, though Ireland has an ocean foaming round her rocky shores, whose very dangers, one would think, must have developed a nautical passion. The only instances that can be called "national" (the sea-songs of Cherry and Sheridan are much too English to be quoted) are the *Chaddagh Boatman* (I think by Davis), and that wonderfully expectant cry of the seaman to his craft as she runs

to harbour in a heavy sea, called—I know not why—*The Boatman's Hymn*, which Mr. Ferguson, with his usual excellence, has so vividly rendered from the Gaelic.

Thus I arrive at my last division, the comic song of Ireland—the youngest, it will be observed, of all the national productions, which would seem strange, considering that humour is so marked a feature of the national mind, did we not remember that a people's humour has much of the temper of the lizard, and is only to be drawn from its recesses by tranquillity and sunshine. Such a history as that of Ireland, a record of prolonged conflicts, devastations, and exhaustions, may well account for the absence of any lyrical facetiousness. Still there are occasional exceptions to be discovered in the Gaelic, as in the *O Woman with the three Cows*, so capitally rendered by Clarence Mangan, of which the grim sardonic irony is palpable enough.

It was in the middle of the past century that songs of humour first appeared—a period of comparative order, whatever was the general suffering—and perhaps the earliest of their number was *Garry Owen* and the *Rakes of Mal-low*, which, if more remarkable for their exuberance than their mirthfulness or taste, are at least striking pictures of the manners of their time, and of that extraordinary spirit of “Buckism” which pervaded both town and country. Soon after, Lysaght's *Sprig of Shillelagh* came to supplement the gentleman's with the peasant's effervescence; the sprightly *Kitty of Coleraine* brought its

touch of rustic gracefulness; *The Boys of Kilkenny* (which Mr. Crofton Croker attributes to Thomas Moore) rose into actual comic poetry, in its well-known image of beauty's lips like "a dish of ripe strawberries smothered in cream," till at length we have the *Groves of Blarney*, and *St. Patrick was a Gentleman*, whose pleasant history Mr. Croker has so carefully detailed to us.

All these productions are plainly native. They bear about them the most indisputable tokens of their race; they are a true Hibernian coinage of the proper temperamental stamp, however varying in the value of their mirthfulness or cleverness; but, unfortunately, they were soon vitiated by a flood of vulgar counterfeits, spurious leaden imitations that were imported from across the channel—flat impostures that sadly debased the diverting medium with which they mingled. Originating in English farces and the exaggeration of Irish character that were so common to the English stage, these effusions made a grand discovery in regard to Irish humour—that it was the sheer result of Irish drink. Poor Pat, who had so long been credited with a natural comicality, was after all but a witless animal, a heavy mass of brogue and blunder, a mere clod, into whose carcase the electric current of potheen poured all his life and pleasantry.

In whatever mood or circumstance it was thought fit to exhibit him, in love or debt, in luck or trouble, in want or plenty, in rags or finery, he was a mere expression of alcohol, of which the amount was nicely indicated by

his particular stage of scamp or maniac. With a tolerable "drop of the craythur" he was the rake who was quite a jewel for blarneying a multitude of Judies; and with "a good pull at the jug" he was the yelling, leaping savage, perfectly grand at the diversion of splitting skulls open at a fair. Nor did the details of these concoctions at all relieve their coarse monotony. A pig, a jig, and a shillelagh; a Celtic screech, a string of blunders; Hub-baboo, Pilliloo, and an exhilarating whack, were their entire stock-in-trade. They were mere noisy iteration, sustained by mechanical vivacity. The only attraction that they exerted lay in their usually good tunes. In every literary respect there was only one thing that was below them; the "slang songs" of Ireland, proper to jails and executions.

Little wonder then that Lover, in common with some thousands of his countrymen, was revolted at these travesties which seemed to supplement the old political with a still coarser social pound-brush; and when he also saw their mischief in estranging English sympathy at a time when it was so much needed, it is not strange he felt desirous to neutralize their influence by presenting their libelled subject in his veritable colours. Addressing his aim to cultured society, he was fortunately possessed of two advantages; first, in the nature of the peasant himself—in that great trait I have so often alluded to, the purity of his affections, which contains an element of gracefulness that necessarily refines him as it is developed;

and next in the vehicle of a song, which is so superior to that of a story, in the important aid it gains from music in exciting the emotions. Thus his lyrics ran into two classes, each of which had its attractions—those of humour in union with tastefulness, which merely aimed at entertainment; and those of humour united to tenderness, that also sought to awaken sympathy.

He was directly prompted to this effort, it appears, by Lady Morgan. He had hitherto written songs only of a sentimental cast, which, whatever their pretensions, had to encounter the overwhelming force and celebrity of Moore's; and thus naturally diverted to a gayer range of subjects, he was on one occasion commenting on the impostures of popular specimens, when his lively countrywoman exclaimed, "Do you think you could do better?" "At all events I'll try," was his resolute response; and the result was *Rory O'More*, a song which at once established a new school in its class of writing, and which attained, in a brief period, to an imperial reputation. United to one of the most hilarious and inspiring of national airs, *I'll follow you over the Mountain, my dear* (contained, I believe, in Bunting's Collection), it flew with the wings of a swallow over Ireland and England, and at length crossing the ocean, became a favourite in every city and almost every village of the West.

Never was the triumph of a true union of words and music more complete, and never, in respect to words, was the union of novelty and merit more delightfully con-

spicuous. Their graceful and piquant mirthfulness, underlain by a delicate fervour which stole into the feelings unawares amidst the laughter, were to many English listeners as much a surprise as an enjoyment. Its music also, descending from the drawing-room to the streets, was ground into public favour on every barrel-organ in the kingdom, and with the military bands succeeded to all the honours of the *British Grenadiers*. The tune indeed, like the tricolour, made the circuit of the world. The course of the sun, it has been said, is followed by the roll of the British drum, and for many years the imperial strain brightened its summons, morning and evening, with the buoyant lilt of the Irish peasant.

Something curious, it must be remarked, attaches to the title of this song. Under the name of Rory O'More an Irish lyric was already existing at the time Lover's was written. It was one of the songs of the Insurrection, addressed by Dr. Drennan to a celebrated native chieftain of the seventeenth century, who was so successful for a time, as to recover a large portion of the South and West to independence. His name became a war cry—"For God, the Virgin, and Rory O'More." What induced Lover to take a name so identified with the national glory, and connect it with ideas of rustic pleasantry and passion, it would be difficult to say, unless he hoped that in so doing he should be helping to extinguish a source of Irish alienation, and make the peasant serve to close what the chieftain had so much widened.

Rory O'More, then, was the commencement of a new school of comic love song, and gradually followed by some forty other lyrics of a like character, which attained in many instances to a kindred popularity, form that peculiar body of verse, tasteful, humorous, and tender, on which their writer's lyric fame must unquestionably rest. He wrote two hundred other songs, which I shall refer to in another place, many of them exquisitely graceful, a few simply and deeply fervent, and most of them so successful that they achieved the largest sales of their time. But all these were essentially English; they were inspired by, and they gratified the refined circles that he moved in, and must be estimated solely in relation to the claims of English writers. But his peasant songs are national; their great and best distinction is that they are Hibernian to the core. Whether in their gaiety or tenderness, their grace or eccentricity, they are the true products of their race, proper in every throb and utterance to that strangely mingled people, whose emotions can so much enkindle, and whose thoughts so much divert us.

It is very gratifying to add that Lover's aim in these compositions must have been in a large measure fulfilled. In England, where humour and melody are two of the prevalent demands, society could only be too thankful for a fresher kind of pleasantry, which could be natural without extravagance, and vigorous without coarseness; and if the music was not always as successful as the words, it was because it was so truly Irish, so often some tricksome

planxty whose abrupt and fitful movements only native lips could follow. Still the impression on English society was something deeper than mere diversion. Poor Pat, so long associated with the worst conditions of the streets, could not be admitted to the drawing-room in these improved and pleasant aspects, without a sense of his better qualities gradually telling in his favour, and thus becoming a growing influence, which, however simple in its source, would in time affect opinion, and, it is not impossible, public conduct.

I shall close this chapter with a few quotations from these admirable lyrics, both because I think it is as well to sustain the praise I have bestowed on them, and also because it is very possible that some of my readers may not as yet have made their agreeable acquaintance. I need not dwell of course on the first and best known of the series, with its coaxing humour that handles so happily a string of native superstitions; and its delicate sense of beauty, as in describing the skin of Kathleen—

So soft and so white—without freckle or speck ;
but shall pass on to a still cleverer and more characteristic specimen, the delightful *Molly Carew*, which, I believe, would have become as popular as its buoyant predecessor, had not its music, the *Planxty Reilly*, been so difficult to sing.

Had Lover written no other lyric, this must have made his reputation. I know of nothing that can compare with its enchanting eccentricity—its marvellous *mélange* of the

tender, ludicrous, and graceful, as its hero, in a mournful ecstasy, now fondly dilates on the charms of his obdurate idol, now, suddenly inflaming, proclaims her cruelty at mass in wearing a bonnet which ruins his devotion by preventing “a peep at her purty face ;” and now warns her of her danger in the person of a certain Katty Naile, who, together with her cow, would jump to get him for a husband. What earnestness surrounds the humour, and what tenderness infuses both ! When has love, since the days of Herrick, breathed more delicate homage than this ?—

Then your lips, oh, Machree,
In their beautiful glow,
Sure a pattern might be
For the cherries to grow.

Similar in spirit and even cleverness is another wail of an unhappy lover—*I'm not myself at all*—wherein Paddy, at confession, begs but half a blessing from the priest because he has lost half of himself by fretting, and desires that the rest of the benediction may be bestowed on his beloved, whom he furnishes with the following proof of the state of atrophy she is causing—

Oh, my shadow on the wall
Isn't like myself at all ;
For I've got so very thin,
Myself says—'tisn't him,
But that purty girl so slim,
Molly dear.

Their shadows becoming identified whilst their souls

remain apart is a very delicate suggestion. In the *Widow Machree* the strain is elevated: there the admirer is a philosopher who founds his lofty argument on the conjugal tendencies of creation, and passing from the domestic affinities, which include the union of shovel and tongs (which "to each other belongs"), he learnedly ranges through natural history, and brings its extensive evidence to bear on the wavering matron—

The birds go in pairs,
And the rabbits and hares ;
Why, even the bears
Now in couples agree ;
And the mute little fish
Tho' they can't spake—they wish,
Oh, Widow Machree.

In another, the *Pastoral Rhapsody*, Paddy becomes a disciple of Jean Jacques, and enlightens his reluctant fair one, who indulges the ordinary prejudices in favour of thrift and work, by a simple reference to the code of nature—

The purty little sparrows
Have neither ploughs nor harrows,
Yet they live at ease and are contint,
Bekase, you see, they pay no rint ;
They have no care nor flusterin
About digging and industherin ;
No foolish pride their comfort hurts,
For they ate the flax and they wear no shirts.

Such are a few specimens of the humour of this incomparable sercis, which my reader has but to compare

with the Paddy Careys, Judy Callaghans, Paddy the Pipers, and other evidences of what was once considered Irish pleasantries, to determine whether Lover's intervention was unnecessary. Turning to the lyrics, where the feeling is as conspicuous as the humour, many charming pieces might be quoted. In the manly and affecting fervour of *Come live in my heart and pay no rent*—(one of the affectionate sayings of Ireland)—we have one of the gems of the collection, a love as generous as it is modest, which reveals its limpid depths amidst a playfulness that brightens it like sunshine on a river—

Mavourneen, when your days were bright,
Never an eye did I dare lift to you ;
But now, ah now, in your fortune's blight
False ones are flying, in sunshine that knew you.
But still on one welcome true rely,
Though the crops should fail, and the cow go dry,
Though the cabin be burned and all be spent,
Come live in my heart, and pay no rent ;
Live in my heart, Mavourneen !

In gentle *Mary of Tipperary* we have the sweetest vision of a barefoot beauty that ever tripped over an upland or made her toilet in a mountain pool ; in *Kitty Creagh*, the cleverest baggage that ever gave good household reasons for going to meet her lover secretly ; whilst a delightful vein of coquetry as full of innocence as archness marks *How to ask and how to have* ; and still better, *I'll leave you*

to guess, in which a damsel who declines to name either her swain or the state of her feelings, suggests them in a series of allusions that are as explicit as they are amusing—

He's as straight as a rush and as bright as the stream
That around it doth gleam,
Oh, of him how I dream !
I'm as high as his shoulder—the way that I know
Is, he caught me one day, just my measure to show.

In *Ranting Riley* and *Barney O'Hea*, where a girl recounts her persecution by a lover who, like “Rory,” in order to conquer has resolved to “taze,” the coquetry grows more comic, and I think it will be admitted that a swain was never dismissed more summarily than in the following decisive words—

I hope you are not going to Bandon fair,
For indeed I'm not wanting to meet you there,
 Impudent Barney O'Hea.
For Corny's at Cork,
And my brother's at work,
And my mother sits spinning at home all the day.
So, as none will be there
Of poor me to take care,
I hope you won't follow me, Barney O'Hea.

As a specimen of their occasional elegance—more, I confess, than is exactly proper to the lips of an Irish peasant—I append a verse from one of the prettiest and most

charmingly piquant of all the lyrics I have ever met with—

As Cupid one day
Hide-and-seek went to play, .
He knew where to hide himself, sly and secure,
So away the rogue dashes
To lie 'midst the lashes
That fringe the bright eyes of sweet Kitty Maclure.
She thought 'twas a fly
Had got into her eye,
So she winked, for the tickling she couldn't endure ;
But Love wouldn't fly
At her winking so sly,
And still lurks in the eye of sweet Kitty Maclure.

CHAPTER VI.

1827—1832.—Lover's Marriage—Its Happy Character—His First Love—Its Advantages—His Commonplace Book—Its Contents—A Sarcasm of Curran's—A Joke of Chief Justice Bushe—The Good Memory of Sir Walter Scott—The Literary Ambition of General Wolfe, &c.—Club Life in Dublin—The Burschenschaft—Charles Lever—The Glee Club and its Patrons—Anecdote of some of its Members: T. Cooke, Alexander Lee, Rophino Lacey, M. W. Balfe—The latter's Humour—Lover's first Drama—*The Graumweal*—1828. His Secretaryship to the Royal Hibernian Academy—Its limited Fame—1830. Development of a new Talent—Lover as a Caricaturist—The Tithe System of Ireland attacked with Satire—The *Irish Horn Book*—Its editor, "Jonathan Buckthorne"—Its illustrator, Samuel Lover—Character and Force of his Illustrations—1832. Collected issue of his Tales and Legends—Arrival in Dublin of Paganini—His Celebrity and his Appearance—Lover's Miniature of the great Violinist—His Conversational Talent—Its effect on Paganini—Aspersions on the great Musician, his Penuriousness, &c., rebutted—His well-known Generosity to Hector Berlioz—His Devotion to his Son—His Confession upon the point—Tribute to his Genius by the Musician Mori.

THE year 1827 became a memorable one for Lover. His reputation was now established as one of the leading miniature painters of Dublin. He had made a pleasant mark in literature,—he was growing popular as a song-writer,—whilst, with a steady increasing income, many friends, and personal qualities which made him a favourite on all sides, it seemed impossible to most people that he could improve his good position. And yet an improvement was ap-

proaching, that promised more to him than all—in the autumn of the year, he married. Happy in so many ties of life, it was his enviable destiny to be happy also in the highest. His wife was a Miss Berrel, the daughter of an architect in Dublin, a man of talent and refinement, whose house was the resort of much agreeable society. Among his many welcome guests, not the least fortunate was Lover, who received from him a very amiable and cultivated woman, to be the good genius of a home, the tranquil cheerfulness of which was never clouded for a day.

Of a gentle affectionate nature, strengthened by principle and sense, this lady was well adapted to soothe his own impulsive tendencies, and especially amidst the ordeal of his professional pursuits. Whatever his success or his philosophy, Lover could scarcely hope to be exempted from the penalties to which all literary and artistic effort is exposed—the feverish excitement, the keen anxieties, the sudden and bitter disappointments, that so rarely find oblivion save in domestic consolation. Home indeed became the anchorage which enabled him to ride in safety through many a sudden gust of trouble, and many a swaying tide of passion; and it is certainly one of the most striking as it is one of the best traits of his character, that he should have been able to unite qualities which are so rarely found compatible—such a devotion to his home, and such a strong love of society.

But Lover was now in his thirtieth year, and it will

scarcely be supposed that he had existed up to this period without any previous attachment. In his "Reminiscences" he tells us that his heart was first surrendered to a fair English girl in Dublin, whose family had a chief share in abating his patriotic notions. Fate was adverse to their wishes, but softened her severity so far as to permit them to indulge a friendship which continued to the close of life. As their affection therefore existed during the three years of his work and study, and perhaps for a time afterwards, it is clear it was one of the sources of his activity and cheerfulness.

I fancy we are all too much inclined to laugh at the notion of a first love. In our maturer and busier years we almost think it becomes a duty to deride its dreams and its illusions. We fear it wastes important time, and debilitates fresh energies. It is a dose of syrup taken early which upsets the stomach for the day. Now, on the contrary, I believe that a first love is often of the greatest good to boyhood. Even to the poetic nature, as in the case of Byron, it is an inspiration that rouses the mind to an earlier trial of its powers. We learn in rapture, as well as "in suffering," some of the truths "we teach in song;" whilst to youth, however practical, it gives a poetry which is just as serviceable in tending to counteract a too frequent excess of selfism. If unable greatly to inflame, at least it never fails to purify. It elevates its idol to such a height of admiration, that it as much excludes all baser feelings as it interdicts all rival ones.

Lover's marriage and improved circumstances enabled him to reciprocate at last some small portion of the courtesies he was so constantly enjoying, and his home became a *réunion* for much of the wit and talent of the city. The result was so agreeable that it seems to have inspired him with the notion of keeping a commonplace book, in which he could note from time to time some of the pleasantry and cleverness that used to circulate about him. Unluckily, however, either owing to the pressure of duties or his reluctance to put down anything that was not intended for the public, this resolve was soon abandoned, and the book was only re-opened after a lapse of thirty years, to wring a sad sigh from its owner on the vanity of good intentions. I extract from the dozen pages to which these Memoranda reach, some of their merriest contents, as indications of what the public might have gained from their continuance.

First, "A sarcasm of Curran's.—In a drawing-room at Dublin, where a great number of mediocrities were airing their importance, an intensely national friend informed him that there was not a man amongst them all who had not had a distinguished ancestor. 'Bless my soul,' exclaimed the wit, 'what a crowd of anti-climaxes!'"

"A joke of a noble Lord.—The peer was blessed with a better half, who was as noted for her penuriousness as he for his humour and public spirit, and on one occasion at dinner, when he inquired the name of the soup, her ladyship said it was giblet, but that it had been made so very

rich she had desired the cook to thin it a little. 'Giblet!' he exclaimed; 'well, of course, my love, if you say so—but, upon my soul, I should have thought it was hot water with a goose dipped in it.'"

Of the well-known Dr. Brennan, whose vivacious but somewhat personal and reckless Magazine was so long the terror and delight of Dublin, he records this piece of satire:—There was a rich physician of the time who never asked a friend to dinner, and in the column of Brennan's obituary was announced the loss of the Doctor's cat, as having died in her accouchement of "a cold caught in his kitchen grate."

Here a happy specimen is given of Paddy as a compositor, taken from an old Dublin newspaper:—

"*Erratum.*—In our yesterday's number, under the head of fashionable intelligence, for—His Grace the Duchess of Rutland, read—Her Grace the Duke."

And here again of Paddy as a patriot:—"An Irishman at Drury Lane Theatre not hearing the tune of 'St. Patrick's Day' played after the National Anthem, as was always the case at home, roared out from the front seat in the gallery, 'St. Patrick's Day! Patrick's Day! If you don't play immadiately, I'll quit the house!'"

"A *bon-mot* of Lord Chief Justice Bushe.—A slave ship had been carried into the port of Cape Town as a prize, but a difficulty occurred in her condemnation owing to the absence of the ship's papers, which had been thrown overboard by the captain at the moment of her seizure.

Whilst the matter was in abeyance, a vessel arrived at the Cape which had caught a shark a few days previously, and on the sailors ripping him open they found a tin case in his stomach containing the missing papers. When this somewhat fabulous story was related to the Chief Justice, he remarked, 'Well, I have often heard of "fishing for evidence," but, upon my word, never such a case of it.'

Here a pleasant instance is recorded of the memory of Sir Walter Scott. "He was visiting a family in 1804, at the time of the threatened invasion, where the children, he was informed, had just been reading *Robinson Crusoe*, and on being asked by the little ones what the French would say if they came over, 'Why,' he replied, 'they would cry out, "Orra, orra! Whurra! orrah!"' (the exclamation of the savages as they retreat under Crusoe's fire)—an answer which, whilst expressive of his own patriotic spirit, provoked quite an uproar of delight in his tiny questioners."

And here is the evidence of a fact little suspected by the world at large, the literary ambition of General Wolfe. The father of a friend of Lover, a Mr. Robinson, was engaged at the storming of Quebec, and the night before the memorable action was in command of a ship's boat immediately astern of that of the General, whom he listened to reciting a poem with a peculiar force of utterance. On his desiring his sailors to pull nearer, he discovered the verse to be Gray's *Elegy*, and on the General concluding it, heard him observe, "I would rather be known to posterity as the author of those lines, than possess the

honour, great as it would be, of beating the French to-morrow." As I believe there can be no question of the authenticity of this remark, its homage to literature is just as striking, as was the selection of such a poem for recital only the night before the hero's death.

But to proceed. I may here briefly refer to some of the clubs Lover belonged to, both as forming a portion of his social life in Dublin, and for the opportunity it gives me of recalling some of his contemporaries, who were afterwards known in London. One of these societies, which I believe I am ante-dating by a few years, was a literary and artistic union that had been founded by Charles Lever, the well-known Irish novelist, when fresh from a German university, and which, in honour of student life, he had denominated the "Burschenschaft." Save in name, however, it must be owned that his vivacious institution bore but very small resemblance to its celebrated prototype. As little likeness could be traced between the hazy, dreamy Germans, and the ardent-blooded Irishmen, as could be detected in their drinks—the bemuddling beer of the one, and the enlivening whiskey of the other; or the hacking, slashing sword-play in which the German soul delighted, and the wit-combats of the Hibernians—the worthier contests of the brain, wherein the only cut-and-thrust were those of repartee and raillery.

Some notion of the humour of this convivial fraternity may be gathered from the grave burlesque of its ceremonials and officials, its Lord Chamberlain, its Royal Pipe-

bearer, its Keeper of the Keys, &c., who surrounded its august ruler, "The Noble Grand" as he was termed—which latter, in virtue of being its founder, was, of course, the facetious Lever; whilst another of its offices was that of Minstrel to the Burschenschaft, whose duty was to furnish poetry and songs on State occasions; and this function, with great propriety, was committed to the hands of Lover. Among the sources of their amusement was the record of their proceedings, entitled "Ye Boke of ye Burschenschaft," which, very happily prefaced by a "right merrie and wondrous historie" of the origin of the Order from the congenial pen of the President, comprised a chronicle of their vagaries, and this, as he had also become their limner, was amply illustrated by their minstrel. The latter painted in addition a grotesque cover for the book, in imitation of that of the missals which are to be found in ancient libraries, and he manufactured, as one of their insignia, the veritable *dodheen* (the short clay pipe of the Irish peasant), which was supposed to have belonged to St. Patrick, and to have been the seal of his official documents.

Lover also became a member of the celebrated Glee Club of Dublin, that was supported by all the *élite* of the musical world of the city, and of which Moore's well-known associate, Sir John Stevenson, was the chairman. In a still more harmonious age this club had been a great attraction to all the principal residents and visitors of the capital, the dignitaries of the Castle honouring it often with their presence, whilst Curran, Toler, and other wits placed

the mental pleasures of its meetings quite on a level with their vocal. There is a little anecdote connected with its history which may have an interest for some of my readers. The leading musicians of the Theatre Royal were among its honorary members, and in several instances became distinguished by a like development of talent and fortune. Commencing in Dublin as violinists, and winning some of their earliest laurels as solo-players at this club, they had successively gone to London to gain a new reputation as vocalists and composers.

Those whose memories can extend to some thirty-five years or more, will readily recall the name of the witty and estimable T. P. Cooke, the original Adolf in *Der Freyschutz*, and Don Alfonso in *Masaniello*, the leader of the Philharmonic Concerts, and joint composer with Horne and Bishop of the operatic versions of Shakspeare's *Comedy of Errors*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Not less readily will they retrace the pleasant tenor of the Haymarket, Alexander Lee, who soon afterwards became the most popular ballad composer of his day; or Rophino Lacey, another successful instrumentalist and vocalist, whose excellent adaptations of *Fra Diavolo* and *Cinderella* are the best our stage possesses; while a still more distinguished name is that of Michael William Balfe, an admirable violinist, a successful baritone at Drury Lane, and, finally, as a composer, almost the Atlas, it may be said, on whose shoulders our modern English opera reposes.

Many who knew this clever Irishman, with his little

sturdy but alert figure, his large round honest eyes, and his hearty, jocund, ringing laughter, will be greatly tempted to think that he had as much reason to be proud of his disposition as his genius. In the long period of my own acquaintance with him, I never once met him out of temper, out of spirits, or out of charity. He had a kindly word for every one, and a helping hand for many, and among his other attractive qualities I may add, he had some little humour, of which he once, in my own hearing, gave a very ready specimen. He was disputing with a friend on the merits of a new German opera, which the latter, among other things, praised as eminently original. "Original?" exclaimed Balfe, "and what do you mean by that?" "Why, I mean to say that it is music which was never heard before." "Well, and I say," he replied, "that it is music which will never be heard again."

All this while it must not be supposed that Lover's enjoyment of society tended at all to relax his industry, or make him weigh his personal tributes against the obligations of his fame. He was of too robust a build for that—took too much pleasure in his work to exchange its exercise for its acknowledgment, and, moreover, was too ambitious—too resolved to hear distinctly the clear decisive voice of the world to be content with any echo of it, in however elegant a form. Accordingly his stories, songs, and paintings continued to flow from him in quick succession, their current being only varied by the production of his first drama. This was a little fairy spectacle founded

on a half-historic legend of which he composed both the words and music.

It was called *Graunweal*, the Celtic name, as I need not tell my Irish readers, of Grace O'Malley, the chieftain's daughter, who became so celebrated in the fourteenth century for her fearless spirit and bold adventures, and whose memory was honoured so much that the bards applied her name to Ireland. Lover treated this popular heroine rather in a poetic than an historic spirit, giving her some supernatural traits, which enabled her to become the good genius of her native province Connaught, and, of course, the especial guardian of a pair of embarrassed lovers. This piece was produced at the Theatre Royal, and was entirely successful, achieving a run of several nights; but as no copy was kept of the manuscript, unless it is to be found hidden away in one of the drawers of the Dublin managers, not a trace of it survives.

The year 1828 added something to Lover's dignity, and also to his occupations. He had been elected some time previously a member of the Royal Hibernian Academy, and he now became its secretary; and until he migrated to London, continued to discharge the duties of his office with equal suavity and zeal. Of this modest national institution, which is so little known in England, I wish it were in my power to supply any details of interest beyond those of its establishment, which I have given in a previous chapter. Projected with the laudable view of developing and fostering native art, it can scarcely be said, for the reasons I have

stated, to have fulfilled its founder's wishes, though it must have been productive of some good, both commercially and socially. Aided by a small grant from Government, it has maintained with varying fortune its existence for seventy years, and it seems impossible to doubt that, what with its annual exhibitions and its other aids to painters, it has had its share in promoting that higher taste for art in Ireland which has been observable in recent times.

It was in the course of 1830 that Lover unfolded a new talent wholly distinct from, if akin, to the five or six he possessed already ; but which talent, at the same time, considering the purely social tenor of his life, was not a whit more surprising than the occasion that produced it. The new capacity was for caricature, and the occasion was political. This occurrence had remained a secret up to the time of his decease, when it was made known in a memorial sketch of him by the "Knight of Innishowen," which appeared in the *Temple Bar Magazine*, for August, 1868, and as I know of no ground for questioning the truth of the disclosure, I avail myself, with much pleasure, of its interesting details.

All who are acquainted in the least degree with the history of Ireland need not be reminded of the disastrous place in it which was so long filled by its tithe-system, that conflict waged so bitterly between Churchman, Catholic and Dissenter, until Lord Stanley's healing Act converted the obnoxious impost into a rent-charge on the

land. The rancours and the heartburnings, occasionally the savage riots, and even the sanguinary collisions caused by the "Battle of the Tithes," had not escaped continual protests from men of all shades of opinion, but lamentation however deep, and objurgations however vehement, had failed to remove the evil; and at length it was thought advisable to try the effect of ridicule as a means of sapping an injustice that could not be carried by assault.

Accordingly, in 1831 a work was issued in Dublin under the title of the *Irish Horn Book*, a very bold and unsparing satire, which was edited and partly written by a Wesleyan farmer and miller from Queen's County, of the name of Brown, whose *nom de plume* was "Jonathan Buckthorn," and who was also called "The Irish Cobbett," aided by some young barristers, *littérateurs*, and, it seems also, members of Parliament. The impression caused by this work may be partly judged by the fact that it subjected some of its contributors to Crown prosecutions, and the excitement thus produced, it is only allowable to infer, had something to do with hastening if not occasioning the politic measure of Lord Stanley.

"This extraordinary book," adds the "Knight of Innishowen," "which had a greater circulation than any work ever published in Ireland, and which created a greater sensation than had been known since the days of Swift, was illustrated with etchings of the most exquisitely humorous character from the hand of Samuel Lover. Various were the pens that supplied the literature, but

his alone were the illustrations. What feasts—Belshazzar feasts of loaves and fishes—it contained; what fishing in the sea of sees; what steeple-chases for the Mitre cup; what satanic shooting excursions (the metrical portion modelled on Porson and Coleridge's *Devil's Walk*), in which the great enemy of mankind, with his dog Cerberus (*proh nefas*), took down and bagged episcopal game! Since Hogarth sketched Churchill as a bear, dressed in canonicals, with a pot of porter in one hand and a clay pipe in the other, there surely never was such audacious caricaturing of ecclesiastics. I forget how many editions of the *Horn Book* were published, but the first went up to several thousands at five shillings a copy. Lover's share in the matter was confided only to a few, but they kept his secret well, otherwise his business as a miniature painter might have been seriously impeded. In after years, as he mixed in the crowds and bustle of London life, this political escapade was seldom spoken of—if not forgotten."

Without dwelling on the minor point of Lover's political opinions, which, though strong, were never manifested, that I am aware of, but on this occasion, and which, moreover, it must be remembered, were those of many other Protestants, there is something curious in this discovery of an additional endowment to his many others, and one that, according to this writer, was of so original a cast that, had he chosen to develop it, the talent must have won him much distinction. Poet, painter, and composer, novelist, dramatist, and lecturer, Lover was also a caricaturist, and

the praise he obtains for his new faculty is certainly supported by the manner in which it was subsequently shown in literature. I allude to the admirable imitations of contemporary writers, which, under the title of *Rival Rhymes*, he wrote in connection with the Burns' Festival of 1859; productions so full of force and humour, so illustrative of what may be termed the proper form of exaggeration, which, seizing happily not only the manner but the mode of thinking of their originals, give you all the illusion of resemblance under the grotesqueness of burlesque—that I know nothing to compare with them since the renowned *Rejected Addresses*.

In 1832 Lover collected and published in a volume the various tales and legends he had contributed to the Dublin magazines, containing among others the popular stories of *The Gridiron* and *New Pittyatees*, to which he gave additional force by the highly characteristic etchings with which they were illustrated. 1832 is also to be considered a sort of era in his life, since one of its events led to the transference of his home and after career to London. This was the arrival in Dublin of Paganini. This wonderful violinist was then at the height of his celebrity, having in an age of great executants won a position so unexampled that even musicians were to be found among his most enthusiastic auditors.

To the melody-loving Irish he was peculiarly welcome, and his attraction was not lessened to their impressionable natures, by a personal appearance that was almost as

singular as his genius. That gaunt and lofty figure from which all the flesh seemed to have wasted, that mass of black and flowing hair, and that pallid, mournful face, with its deep-set earnest eyes, which could brighten, when excited, with a strange impassioned glow that it was not difficult to exaggerate into something magical or elfish—no Irish crowd could gaze on without a superstitious shiver. He was the one thought of the day; and Lover, who beheld in him an admirable subject for his pencil, as much adapted to draw out his power as to attract public attention, very wisely begged the virtuoso to accord him the honour of a sitting, a request which was very promptly and cordially assented to.

Lover's miniature of Paganini stands out beyond all question as his finest work of art. It is that which exhibits him in the perfection of his latter and higher style; in the force and balance of those graver and more substantial characteristics, that had gradually enlarged and dignified his early florid manner. It was also, for the period, a miniature of an unusual size, measuring six and a half inches by six, having been painted on two pieces of ivory, the junction of which was cleverly effected at the edge of the painted table. Of a work which is so conspicuous, whether in respect to its merit or its results, one that achieved the double end of confirming its painter's fame in Ireland and establishing it in England, where it served both to introduce him and to show him in his strength, every incident is interesting, and not the least is the clever

way in which its striking likeness was obtained. This is given by the writer of the sketch of him in the *Dublin University Magazine*, who records a visit to Lover's studio while the picture was in progress.

One of the secrets of success in portraiture is the conversational talent which enables the artist to get at the best expression of his sitters, and nothing can be pleasanter than the illustration of it that is afforded in this instance, when by a compliment the most adroit, but apparently ingenuous, the painter so well contrived to rouse the animation of the musician.

"Paganini being rather dull," observed Lover to his friend, "I wished to excite his attention, so remarked to him the great beauty of a little *capriccio motivo* in one of his concertos, and then hummed the tune. Pag cocked his ear.

"'You have been in Strasburg,' said he.

"'Never,' I replied.

"'Then how did you hear that air?'

"'I heard you play it.'

"'No—if you were not in Strasburg.'

"'Yes—in London.'

"'That concerto I composed for my first appearance in Strasburg, and I never played it in London.'

"'Pardon me, you did—at the Opera House.'

"'I don't remember.'

"'It was the night you played an *obligato* accompaniment to Pasta.'

“‘Ah, Pasta!’ he exclaimed, and his beautiful eye brightened at the remembrance of the night.”

As Rhoderic Dhu

“Felt the joy that warriors feel,
In foemen worthy of their steel,”

the great magician seemed to glow at the recollection of an occasion when two such artists stood together, and were mutually inspired by each other's excellence.

“‘Pasta!’ he repeated, ‘how she sang that night!’

“‘Yes,’ said I, ‘and how you played!’

“‘Ah!’ he exclaimed with a shrug of satisfaction, ‘but that *motivo*! Yes, I did play it at the time, but only that once in London. You must be a musician, for it is not an easy air to remember.’

“‘It was encored, Signor,’ said I, with a complimentary bow, ‘and so I heard it twice.’

“‘Aha!’ said he, with another shrug of approval; ‘but still I say it is not easy to remember except by a musician.’”

And so Lover gained his point. Paganini was sufficiently excited to respond with a bright expression, and the animation thus aroused was easily sustained to the close of the sitting. The electric current, for art purposes, has rarely been provided with better media. The great singer inspired the violinist, the violinist inspired the painter, and the result was a superb likeness which, coupled with its execution generally, renders this picture one of the most admirable that adorns its field of effort.

Deferring to my next chapter a few remarks upon its merits, as well as on some of the external causes that contributed to its marked impression, I think a parting word is due to its interesting subject—an amiable as well as a highly-gifted man, who has been subjected to misrepresentations which I have always thought were very rancorous. He has been attacked for his love of money; the charge brought against Catalani and most musicians of eminence that have come to London in my time;—called penurious and mean, a man capable of rising to the loftiest position as an artist, but who was better pleased to debase his talent to the gainful business of a trickster. I am able, from my own knowledge, to rebut the charge of his penuriousness. I knew him, whilst in London, do many kindly and generous services, the more to his honour that they were secret, though, it seems, the less to his advantage. I have been informed that, whilst he was travelling, nothing could be more liberal than his expenditure; whilst there is one known fact, at least, which should have arrested such aspersion—his generosity to Hector Berlioz, on whom he voluntarily bestowed the sum of twenty thousand francs in order to extricate him from his difficulties, and enable him to complete an important work.

Paganini toiled for wealth undoubtedly; he turned his gifts to the best account; he demanded high prices from managers for attracting vast assemblies; but if all this was disgraceful, he could plead a tolerable excuse for it

which his detractors, who must have been aware of it, have made it a point never to notice—this was the welfare of his son, a young and interesting boy, who was in extremely delicate health, and in whom his thoughts, hopes, and happiness centred with a devotion that was very touching. He had himself been subjected to severe vicissitudes in early life, and he was resolved that his only child, so little adapted to sustain such trials, should never be exposed to them. To a friend, who was regretting that he did not more frequently display his power in the performance of acknowledged masterpieces, and less in those *tours de force* which were decried as executant trickery, he is said to have explained the mystery in a very terse and sufficient manner: “I play on four strings for my fame; I play on one string for my son.”

With what mastery he sustained his fame and grasped, whenever he pleased, the greatest triumphs of his art, I could scarcely better show than in the acknowledgment of Mori, one of the most highly accomplished musicians, and, by general consent of the best judges, one of the most brilliant violinists that had appeared in London since Viotti. When asked by a brother performer, on leaving a concert of the *Gran Maestro's*, whether he did not envy the power he had been witnessing, “Oh no!” he exclaimed; “there is no envying Paganini; he is a great deal too much above me!”

CHAPTER VII.

1833—1836.—The Paganini Miniature at the Royal Academy Exhibition—Miniature Painting in England—Its great Exemplars, Sir William Ross and Mr. Thorburn—Caricatures of Paganini—A Violinist painted in Character—Personal Attacks and Exaggerations—Nature *versus* Popular Fancy—Estimate of the Miniature—Eulogy on its Violin by Wilkie, Chantrey, and Sir Martin Archer Shee—Lover's resolve to remove to London—Proposed Miniature of the Princess Victoria—A trying Disappointment—Lover *versus* Hayter—Lover's activity in London—His introductions to Society—Malibran and "The Loan of a Gridiron"—Sydney Smith and "Rory O'More"—Lover's greater popularity as a Song-writer and Composer—Comparison of Painting with Poetry and Music—Greater attraction of the latter—Madame Vestris the introducer of his new Songs to the Public—Poetic standard of a Lyric—Specimens of the new Series: *What will you do, Love? Call in vain, Cupid's First Dip—The Songs of the Superstitions—What's in a Name?*

It was at the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1833 that the Paganini miniature, which had been so great a success in Ireland, was presented to the London public, and brought its author, who till then was unknown in England as an artist, an immediate reputation. Rarely has fame been gained so rapidly on the strength of a single painting. All who were qualified to judge of it—the leading critics of the day, and the most authoritative connoisseurs—were very flatteringly unanimous in their opinion of its merits

And it must be remembered that this was at a time when such a distinction implied the sustainment of no moderate ordeal. Miniature painting at this period had made a great advance in England. It was practised by several professors of unquestionable ability, and was distinguished by the talents of two competitors especially, who in their respective styles and methods might be termed exemplars of their art, Sir William Ross and Mr. Thorburn.

There must be many who can still look back to their well contrasted attributes: the peculiar refinement of the one—the marvellous completeness of his finish—the aerial softness of his colour; and the breadth and vigour of the other—the free, careless, suggestive touch that seemed to dash off its effects and accomplish at a leap what most of his compeers did in paces. How naturally they assumed their respective spheres of excellence, and laid claim to an interesting and exclusive *clientèle*; the fair and graceful women and beautiful children of the first, and the sportive boys and frank and hearty or characteristic men of the second. It was by the side of two such artists that Lover had to struggle into fame; and to say that he held his ground against them is to pronounce his highest praise.

Of course he was very fortunate in being introduced by such a subject. The celebrity of the great executant, which had gone on steadily accumulating during the tour he had made of Europe, may be said to have reached its height in London. He was not so much to be called

the lion as the *furor* of the musical world, with this distinction, that in his case the madness had rather augmented than decreased by the power of sound. And second only to the impression created in all quarters by his genius, was that produced by his strange appearance, which many considered as great a marvel—and the more imaginative of the public could not but look on as the complement of his musical endowments. In that gaunt unearthly figure, and that marked expressive face, nature had perfected a unity as appropriate as it was rare.

His value, therefore, as a sitter could scarcely be exceeded, and yet, strange to say, it does not appear that up to this period any creditable likeness of the great musician had been taken. There were such temptations to excess, both in the circumstance of his celebrity and his highly emphasized physique, that his portraits had been hitherto little better than caricatures—mere panderings to the public craving for the *outré* and the exceptional—whilst others that were less offensive, and that honestly aimed at some expression, at some little increase of spirit, as a means of balancing his mind and features, fell into the manifest mistake of endeavouring to indicate his genius—to paint him, as it were, in character—with one of those looks, sudden and signal, that he flashed during his performance, when, kindling with the power that enchained and thrilled his hearers, he gave some revelation of his strong emotion and romantic fancy—forgetting that, in order to give reality to such a look, it was neces-

sary to employ accessories that would have rendered it absurd; that the aroused and inspired visage, flashing with the volcanic fire of genius, required a fiddle under its chin, grasped by bony spasmodic fingers.

Still, whilst it was obviously impossible to depict him as an artist, it seems extraordinary that no good attempt had been made to paint him as a man,—to give the customary expression of a face that was so remarkable, and which, with all its peculiarities, it was not difficult to transcribe. And especially is it strange that no such attempt was made in England, where there was so much talent for the purpose, and where also there was so much necessity for correcting false impressions. In the height of his popularity Paganini was sadly libelled. Whilst crowds who had only seen him from the back seats of concert-rooms, or in the distortions of the print-shops, exaggerated his lineaments into something diabolic—something of the Fuseli school of conception, or the Byronic class of grandeur,—there were others who tried to give a moral support to this absurdity by attacks upon his character, charging him with avarice or profligacy, on the ground of foreign imputations which he had publicly refuted.

To all these aspersions, as well as fancies, his face was really his best reply. Unless nature was a great impostor, never had a man been more maligned. The prevailing cast of his countenance was a singular benignity. It had an open, kindly, bland composure, that engaged the con-

fidence at once. The eyes, not large but finely formed, were as full of tenderness as thought; the brow had a noble breadth; the mouth, delicately cut, trembled with feeling, and could part into the most enchanting smile imaginable. The expression had a further interest in the shade of sadness it possessed, a tinge of patient melancholy that was rarely effaced by its greatest brightness. Under these influences, all the effect of his more striking and decisive features—the heavy eyebrows, the prominent nose, the massive square-cut vigorous chin—assumed a new and agreeable character. Their natural air, which was simply one of force and resolution, passed into a calm and genial dignity that was unusually engaging. Such a face was surely entitled to all the honours of the pencil.

It was the good fortune, then, of Lover to be the first who with any adequacy presented this face to the English public, and so enabled them to gain some notion of the real nature of the man. Popular conception had given him a mask,—had prompted the exaggeration which his limners had indulged in, and it was Lover's pleasant duty to trace his actual look instead, its powerful outlines subdued under the play of its mental vividness, and the gentle struggle of its smile and sadness,—but with the light controlling the shadow, that indicated just as clearly the strength of kindly sympathies. And so rendered in this miniature, how elevated and yet how graceful becomes the bearing of the head; how sustained and how

agreeable the repose of the seated figure, in which the calm of the musician's soul is so well diffused throughout his person. The long pendant glossy curls which give such freedom to the brow, and the relaxed and pliant hand, so muscular in its grasp of the instrument, but so feminine and tender in its moments of quiescence, equally display these characteristics.

Again, how delightful is the colour! The delicate pallor of the flesh is as far removed from a hue of sickliness as the rich substantial treatment of the garments and the table—almost *impasto* in their depth—are distinct from a dull opacity. All the detail is just as striking. With what illusion is reproduced the *maestro's* priceless violin! How gently and unobtrusively, but with what wonderful distinctness, it is placed against the wall, despite its neutral tint and the slight relief it gains from the table! In every line and every touch of it, what a triumph of reality! Who could either add to or impugn the eulogy which was bestowed on it by such judges as Wilkie, Chantrey, and Sir Martin Archer Shee, that the instrument was a study worthy of the hand of Gherard Dhow!

These brief hints may serve to explain something of the great impression produced by this picture when on the walls of the Royal Academy; and not only on the refined and critical who could do justice to its merits, but the world at large, which, whilst wholly unprepared for its new likeness, lingered round it with an intuitive

conviction of its truth. Its painter, when he crossed the Channel, and learnt how much he had contributed to correct popular impressions, felt no trifling addition to the enjoyment of his success. But the best evidence of that success was, of course, the more substantial. A number of flattering commissions poured in on him immediately, and he found himself in the midst of a larger and higher sphere of work. A wish that had been long stirring in his heart was now ripened into a resolution. For many years he had looked on London as the true arena for his talents, both on the score of its higher honours and more adequate rewards, and if the example of so many of his countrymen had been no warrant for the thought, it had sufficient vindication in the failing health of his wife and the welfare of his two children. Accordingly, returning to Dublin to make arrangements for the change, in the summer of 1834 he transferred his home to the great metropolis.

These events, which were so full of sunshine for the indefatigable artist, were not, however, without their shadow in a very trying disappointment. Whilst in London, Lover had painted several persons of distinction, and among others a near relation of Sir John Conroy, who was then Controller to the household of Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent. This effort happening to fall under the inspection of the Duchess, her satisfaction was so great that she authorized Sir John to hold out to its delighted artist the hope of his having the

honour of painting the Princess Victoria. Early in the spring of the ensuing year, he received a letter from Sir John, asking him whether he could come to London at once and enjoy the promised honour ; but, as ill-luck would have it, domestic circumstances had occurred which prevented his leaving Ireland, and in reply to his great regrets, all his correspondent could do was to promise that at some future day he should still obtain the chance he had lost. That chance, however, never came. Shakspeare has told us of a tide of fortune which must be taken at the flood, but that is a tide, as we all know, that flows but once in a man's lifetime. The golden opportunity was gone that, could he have seized it, might have been the means of promoting him to the honour of being "Miniature Painter in Ordinary" to her present Gracious Majesty ; and so, as his Dublin memorialist adds, "have enabled the Court chronicler to announce a Lover instead of a Hayter * as the possessor of the office."

It is scarcely necessary to say that in migrating to London, Lover carried with him the whole of his diversified activity. If a painter in the first place, not less was it his intention to be a song-writer, a tale-writer, and a composer in the second ; and accordingly, no sooner had he decided on a residence (in Charles Street, Berners Street, after a short stay near the Regent's Park), then all his talents went to work with their accustomed assiduity, and were very soon rewarded with their usual good results. Songs and

* The late Sir George Hayter.

pictures poured from his hand in their old alternate fashion; he published a second series of his *Tales and Legends* from the Dublin Magazines (capitally illustrated again with his own characteristic etchings), and he widened his fame in the ensuing winter by making a favourable *début* as a dramatist. Thus, no length of time had elapsed before his name was fairly launched on that larger sea of enterprise which it had been so long his ambition to traverse, and on which it was his pleasant destiny to meet with so little adverse weather.

Meanwhile, he was quite as fortunate in his social acquisitions. It was not long before he had entered the leading literary and artistic circles, which then enlivened the metropolis, and was welcomed by them in a manner that could scarcely have been more flattering. Most of the celebrities of the day, whether on account of their wit or talent, were to be found under the roof of Sergeant Talfourd, Mr. Harness, Mr. Fonblanque, Mrs. Jameson, Mr. John Martin the painter, and last, not least, Lady Blessington, and it was Lover's privilege to find amongst them some of his most substantial friends. He also joined several of the clubs and professional societies of London, and everywhere discovered what a pleasant introduction he had gained by means of his songs and stories. When in the green room of Drury Lane, he was presented by Charles Young to that most genial and delightful woman, as well as wonderful *artiste*, Malibran, she held out her hand to him, exclaiming in the prettiest broken English

possible, "Will you lend me the loan of a gridiron?" and when, on paying his respects to Sydney Smith and apologizing that he had twice addressed a note to him at a wrong number, nine or eleven instead of ten—"A good beginning," exclaimed the wit; "there's luck in odd numbers, says Rory O'More."

Lover's first marked impression on the London public was as a painter, and it is as a painter, there is little doubt, that he displayed his highest power. Portraiture, in his case, was the art that rested less on specialities, and more on the proportionate development and balance of its constituents. It was the least national of his capacities, but it was undoubtedly the most perfect. It was also the one that placed him abreast of the highest talent of his time. During the twelve years he was an exhibitor on the walls of the Royal Academy, and especially in his great likenesses of Lord Brougham and the Indian "Moulvie," he fully sustained, if he never surpassed, the merits of his Paganini miniature. Nevertheless it is a fact that all this while, and throughout his life, the art in which he most excelled brought him comparatively the least credit. It was as a song-writer and composer, not as a painter, he became popular. Where there were a dozen men who appreciated his successes with the pencil, there were hundreds who knew and admired what he had done with the pen and at the piano.

At the same time it is to be said, that whilst painting has the more mental, and song-writing and music the

more emotional influence on the world, they presented in his case the contrast of great refinement and simplicity; and thus a special cultivation was required to enjoy the one, whilst the others appealed for the most part to universal sympathies. It must also be remembered that poetry and music reach the masses more immediately than the sister art of painting. Type enables them to circulate, whilst a picture becomes a fixture. We must take ourselves to the painting, whilst the song comes to us. Thus, as Mr. Campkin pithily remarks in his memorial sketch of Lover, which accompanied a photograph—"The fame of a successful painter must needs be of much slower growth than that of a successful poet, more particularly the lyrical. Even if its achievement were as early, it would not be equal in degree. We believe in the fame of the one—we almost feel that of the other. That of the former may be said to exist with the million upon credit, whilst the lyrist, on the contrary, possesses it in the paid-up capital of his readers' and hearers' admiration."

It is no such wonder then, after all, that song and music became the source of Lover's greatest popularity. It is also to be remembered that here again he had the advantage of a very telling introduction. If Paganini's countenance was his fortunate usher in the one case, not less lucky was he in the other, in the talents and fame of Madame Vestris, then in the full bloom of her attraction as the great favourite of the London stage, and also manageress

of a theatre which her taste and spirit had converted into one of the most enjoyable of the metropolis. One of the features of the *petite comédie* which formed the staple of its entertainments, was the charming songs she introduced in them, and sung with an archness and refinement that were only equalled by her melodiousness; and as Lover's compositions were especially adapted to her use, it is no wonder she was not slow to detect their peculiar merits and to bring them forward whenever an opportunity occurred—their success on most occasions forming one of the best impressions of the night.

Such, then, was the outset of what I have distinguished as Lover's English group of songs,—that series of elegant and tender efforts, amounting at least to a couple of hundred, which are so entirely distinct from his national and peasant lyrics, and are so especially addressed to the tasteful circles that inspired them. One of the earliest of their number was certainly one of the most delightful—whether in respect to words or music—the delicate and piquant *Under the Rose*; and they went on widening their attraction with others of like character, till they attained their greatest popularity with *The Angel's Whisper*, the *Four-leaved Shamrock*, *The Land of the West*, and other favourites that were found for so many years on every piano in the land.

That these songs were invariably as poetic as they were successful, it will hardly be supposed. Lover himself admits that many of them could scarcely challenge

criticism apart from their technical adaptation to their music. As he holds, however, that the latter is the ruling object of a lyric—a point which I shall have occasion to examine in another chapter—it is but due to him to consider his principle whenever we estimate his works. Whilst deprecating baldness—saying a song must always have a thought in it, and be agreeably expressed—he contends that it need not belong to the highest class of poetry; that simplicity is more important to it than pomp of words or elaborate finish; that its feeling should at all times be rather suggested than paraded; that it should neither philosophize, nor preach, nor “protest overmuch,” after the fashion of the Player Queen in *Hamlet*.* All this may be admitted; and yet, I think, the lyric principle is capable of a little fuller statement than he has given it, if we would arrive at a sufficiently precise notion of its nature—an expansion which, after all, would not much depart from Lover’s meaning.

A song’s perfection, it seems to me, lies in the balance it maintains between its thought and its emotion. Its feeling is its life-blood, as its fancy is its bloom and colour, and their relation is invariably to complement each other; the one sinks as the other rises. Thus, as the feeling is light or vehement, hilarious or fervent, it determines the amount of fancy. As it deepens into passion, its language necessarily simplifies in order to give the passion vent. It has a force that forbids delay, and a dignity

* Preface to his poetical works.

that rejects ornament; but as the emotion shallows or gets gayer, fancy is just as much required to give beauty to the current, which no longer hurries us away with it. The latter only becomes objectionable when it impedes what it should adorn, as feeling only fails when it attempts to exalt unworthy objects.

Tried by these standards, it must be admitted that several of the lyrics of this series are scarcely exempt from the charge of weakness, either in respect to fervour or embellishment; whilst, on the other hand, it may be affirmed that many of them are distinguished by an elegance and tenderness, combined with a terseness of expression, which worthily entitle them to enduring admiration. As it is possible my reader may not be familiar with these specimens, since it is not always the most popular that is the most poetic of such creations, I will briefly allude to a few of them by way of a conclusion to this chapter.

With all the merits of *The Angel's Whisper*, the greatest favourite undoubtedly of all Lover's serious lyrics, but which—with another touching effort, *Between my Sleeve and me*—is as Irish as it is pathetic, and belongs, of course, to his peasant songs, I am more inclined to cite the more passionate and, to me, not less affecting *What will you do, Love?* which has always struck me as exhibiting one of the happiest instances of true simplicity, born of a powerful emotion. Not a fanciful image or expression attempts to ornament or impede the full deep flowing of the answer

which the sorrowing girl gives to the question of her departing and doubtful lover—her overcharged heart can only permit the directest words, which to each change of the inquiry makes her reply but the more pathetic. When he asks “What would she do?” if his ship were wrecked on its return home, what can exceed the unstudied and impetuous fervour of her response?—

So thou wert spared, I'd bless the morrow,
In want and sorrow,
That left me you ;
And I'd welcome thee from the wasting billow,
This heart thy pillow,
That's what I'd do.

Almost as affecting, if not as simple, is that calm murmur of despair breathed by a slighted or betrayed lover, who, in a series of natural images, bids his mistress “call in vain” on the revival of a lost passion. Nothing can be more touching than its desolation, its fixed and hopeless chill of soul, or better sustained than it is by the fitful and suggestive rhythm of its native air, which swells and breaks so like the surge on a wintry and lonely shore.

Call back the dew
That on the rose at morn was lying ;
When the day is dying,
Bid the sunbeams stay ;
Call back the wave
What time the ebbing tide's receding ;
Oh, all unheeding
Of thy voice are they.

As vain the call
Distraction makes on love departed,
When the broken-hearted
Bitter tears let fall.
Dew and sunshine, wave and flower,
Renewed, return at destined hour,
But never yet was known the power
Could vanished love recall.

More in its feeling perhaps than its expression, but still very delicate and musical, is the charm of another pensive song, a sigh over a lost bird, which suggests the fleeting of some higher happiness :—

Oh, the sweet bird that sang to me
All the year round so sweet a song ;
Adding a grace to the summer tree,
And making the winter appear less long.
'Twas not the linnet—it was not the wren,
'Twas not the robin—ah, what was it then ?

Ah ! where is the fond one that hears me sing,
Who never hath wept o'er some fleeting thing ?

In another place the snow prompts the musings of an old and saddened man, but how thoughtfully and quaintly :—

The hope of airy birth
Is stained on reaching earth
Like the snow.
While 'tis sparkling in the ray
'Tis melting fast away
Like the snow.

A cold deceitful thing,
 Though it comes on dove-like wing ;
 'Tis but rain disguised appears,
 And our hopes are frozen tears
 Like the snow.

In the parting words of a lover to a doubting mistress, most of the above qualities are mingled with a manly and engaging tenderness :—

You said my heart was cold and stern,
 You doubted love when strongest.
 In future years you'll live to learn
 Proud hearts can love the longest.
 Ah ! sometimes think, when pressed to hear,
 When flippant tongues beset thee,
 That all must love thee when thou'rt near,
 But one will ne'er forget thee.

In those gayer and heartier specimens, *An Honest Heart to Guide us*, *Never Despair*, and *The Voice within*, fortitude and sympathy are strengthened with thoughts as pleasant as they are healthy. In *Beauty and Time*, and *The Wind and the Weathercock*, the elegance becomes as conspicuous as the sprightliness and fancy. Take these couplets from the graceful playfulness of *Cupid's First Dip*. The boy having come to a stream in which he ventures only his foot, the nymph of the water bids him be cautious or bold :—

Jump in or keep out ;
 If you dabble, no doubt
 You'll go home with a cough,
 And the ladies will scoff,
 For the very worst thing is for Love to take cold.

Thus admonished, he jumps in, and the nymph—who delightedly observes,

With your dear little wings, I'm sure you're a duck—
yet returns to her caution :—

But wild duck don't dabble ;
Once o'er head and ears
Away with your fears,
For Love never sinks when determined to swim.

As a specimen of the more reflective verse of the series I may quote the concluding couplets of the *Child and the Autumn Leaf* ; a little one seen at play upon the bank of a forest stream, and throwing on its current the withered leaves :—

Fair child, if by this stream you stray
When after years go by,
The scene that makes thy childhood's sport
May wake thy age's sigh.
When fast you see around you fall
The summer's leafy pride,
And mark the river hurrying on
Its ne'er returning tide,
Then may you feel, in pensive mood,
That life's a summer dream,
And man at last forgotten falls
A leaf upon the stream.

Some of the most popular of the series, as many may remember, were published under the title of *Songs of the Superstitions of Ireland* ; and as a proof of how the cleverest

authors and publishers may be foiled in the selection of a name, I conclude with a rather amusing misconception of the one in question:—

A worthy country gentleman, of evidently staunch Protestant principles, entering the shop of Messrs. Duff and Hodgson, inquired what was new and attractive in the musical world just then. He was informed that the “Songs of the Superstitions” were very popular. “Superstitions!” he exclaimed; “Superstitions, sir! no, no! nothing of that sort for my family. I wish you a good morning.”

CHAPTER VIII.

1836—1838.—*Lover's Merits as a Novelist*—Preliminary Survey of Irish Fiction.—Its two Classes : Romantic and National—The Sentimental Romance of Lady Morgan : *St. Clair, Ida of Athens*, &c.—The Historical of Grattan and Croly : *The Heiress of Bruges, Salathiel*, &c.—The purely Imaginative of Maturin : *The Fatal Revenge, Melmoth*, &c.—Distinctions of the National Character—Miss Edgeworth its first Illustrator—Her deficiency—The old Irish Gentry : their Intensity—The Protestant Gentry : their Comic Romance—Lady Morgan the Founder of the National Fiction—The Irish Peasant—His Intensity unbroken by his Sufferings—His Vindictiveness and Misery—Griffin, Banim, and Carleton his Vindicators—Banim's object, Catholic Relief—*Lover's* object as a Tale-writer identical with that of his Songs—The Peculiarity of Irish Fiction—Its Novels belong to the higher classes, its Romances to the lower—As a whole, a Mirror of the Past—The Novelists of Ireland—Miss Edgeworth the least National—Her Merits and Defects—The Painter of the Upper Classes only—Deficient in the native Temperament, the Key to the National Character—Her Anglo-Irish Stories : *Ennui, The Absentee*, &c.—Her Failure to sketch the Peasant—*Castle Rackrent* and *Rosanna*—*Ormond*, her best Work, and its admirable "King Coney"—The true Basis of her Fame : *Belinda, Patronage*, &c.—Lady Morgan a great Contrast—Her true Irish Temperament, with all its Merits and its Failings—A supposed Irish De Staël—Her Excellence as a Novelist—Her *O'Donnell* and *Florence Macarthy* : their Character Painting ; their Dialogue ; their Fashionable and Middle Life ; their Peasantry, Macrory, O'Leary, Shane, &c.—Her Comic Invention : the Mock Trial and the "Jug-day"—Her Political and Party Warfare—Her chief Adversary, J. W. Croker—Alleged Causes of his Enmity—Her ultimate Revenges—Her Witticism on Croker—Charles Lever the Last true Irish Novelist—His two Classes of Stories, the Effervescent and the Observant—His Comic Romances—The Irish

Smollett—His Second Class of Stories, Tales of the Decay of Landed Families: *The Knight of Gwynne*, *The Martins of Cro Martin*, &c.—Their Gallery of Portraits—Their Wit, Thought, and Observation—Their striking Dramatic Scenes—Charles Maturin's one Novel, *Woman, or Pour et Contre*—Its Subject, Power, and Painfulness.

IN 1836 Lover commenced his toils as a novelist. The "Tales and Legends" he had written previously turning on the illustration of a single character, or perhaps a single incident, belonged of course to the class of sketches. His first three-volume story, and which was also, according to rule, written and given to the world complete, was prompted by the popularity of his lyric *Rory O'More*. This model of a comic love-song was now a favourite with all classes, and he wisely selected its buoyant hero as the central figure of a comic narrative. Its successor, *Handy Andy*, the superior effort of the two, was commenced in "Bentley's Miscellany," and continued for some chapters to be issued as a serial; and his last production, *He would be a Gentleman*, originally entitled *Treasure Trove*, was written and published in like manner, their pages in both cases being illustrated by his own etchings. These, together with his sketches, compose the sum of his prose works, and if it be interesting to see the place which they can be justly said to occupy in the fiction of their country, this can only be effected by a survey of what is peculiar to the labours of his precursors and contemporaries.

Irish fiction, I need not say, is of comparatively modern origin. Like Irish art and Irish humour, it was but little adapted to the earlier and stormy periods of its people's

history, when only poetry, the language of emotion, could become the medium of the popular feelings. It rose with the present century, amidst the calm created by the Union, and almost simultaneously, in two clearly defined classes—the romantic and the national. The first of these divisions was formed of many marked constituents. There were the romances that were inspired by the German sentiment of the day, such as the *St. Clair*, *Ida of Athens*, and *The Missionary* of Lady Morgan; there were others whose writers, a little later, trod with grace and picturesqueness in the historic steps of Scott, such as the *Jacqueline of Holland* and the *Heiress of Bruges* of Colley Grattan; and there were again others in the same direction, but with more poetry and vigour, which came from the pen of Dr. Croly, such as the impressive *Salathiel*, the graphic and energetic *Marston*, and the brilliant and witty *Tales of St. Bernard*.

Above all, however, there were the works of Maturin,—those startling and enthralling, however sombre and repellent fictions, which, with all their defects of art, and taste, and insufficiency of purpose, lift the mystery and terror and physical agencies of Mrs. Radcliffe into an imaginative grandeur worthy of Shelley or Novalis. There were *The Albigeneses*, with its masterly contrasts of the hunted people and their hunters; *The Fatal Revenge*, with its terrible capacities and convulsions of the human soul; and *Melmoth*, with its amazing pictures of guilt, malignity, and suffering, and its girl of the Indian seas—its Inmalee, loveliest concep-

tion of youth, purity, and ardour. All these were eminent efforts, but they were too entirely reproductive of European types and circumstances to claim the name of Irish fiction, too exotic in conception and colouring to stir the pulse of native sympathy. It was another class of stories which met the yearning of the time—a class that sought at home for its inspiration and material, in the richer and fresher elements of Irish nationality.

The national character was a composite that well deserved this exposition. From the days of Raleigh and Spenser downwards it had been something *sui generis* in the varieties of the Celtic family, a grand diversity in unity that had no counterpart in Europe. It was not merely its curious assemblage of the most opposite constituents—humour and pathos, trust and suspicion, strong affection and vindictiveness—but it was the intensity they all exhibited, and the alternations of which they were capable. The very condition on which a passion seemed to exist in the native soul was the possibility of its passing into the opposite extreme.

The German mind had nothing of the gaiety or pathos of the Irish, the Spanish and Italian not a particle of its exuberance and grotesqueness; the French had just as little of its earnestness and purity. Each had greater acquisitions in science, poetry, and art; but where anything so fresh and original as the Hibernian himself? It almost seemed even as if the national faith had been among the moulds of the national character. If the calefactive depths

of Celticism were the source of the native vehemence, Catholicism, the religion of emotion, had at least tended to sustain it. It was not ungenerous to infer that the narrowing of thought in one direction had the effect of narrowing it in the masses generally, and giving a freer play to feeling.

Of a mind so strangely constituted the earliest picture that appeared was in the novels of Miss Edgeworth, but these are stories that, with all their merits, are scarcely entitled to be called national. I hardly need observe that they refer chiefly to the fashionable classes, including but slightly the middle ranks, and touching with but little truth the peasantry ; and yet, even when so restricted, which still exhibit the defect that their society is wholly Protestant, and, save in a single instance, has nothing of the national intensity. In the old Catholic gentry this was a feature that was conspicuous. Their rank, wealth, and independence were all circumstances that augmented it. They lived in periods of convulsion which daily served to give it prominence, either in acts of the truest heroism or the most pitiless reprisal.

The Protestant families that replaced them were destined to imbibe their ardour rather on its festive side than its tragic. They found a princely hospitality to be one of the distinctions of their new estates ; there was something electrical in the spirit of their transitional times, something contagious in the fervent and humorous nature of their dependants ; until at length, gradually kindling

with the national effervescence, they boiled over in the last century in that uproarious *mélange* of mad adventure, wild indulgence, and purely sociable hostility that made their lives the most exceptional of any to be found in Europe. All this delirium, however, or rather this grand class intoxication, which obtained so good a sedative in the collapse, social and political, that accompanied the Union, was at an end when Miss Edgeworth undertook to draw their picture; their volcanic days were over,—their explosive and lawless era of escapade and ebullition,—and they were now capable of being painted in the quiet colours of a novel which dismissed tints of extravagance for those of a temperate amenity.

The national tales of Ireland really commence with Lady Morgan. It is at her hands we must seek for that truer mirror of native society that enlarges into the reflection of all creeds and classes, as well as that humour and warmth of temperament needed to animate the reflex, and supply to every outline its due colour and reality. It is this writer who presents us with equal vividness and candour the Catholic whom exile and heroic service have ennobled, and the Protestant that culture has ameliorated and refined; and if we feel that her survey might have rested a little longer on the less conspicuous middle ranks, still she repays us by being the first who gives any just notion of the peasant. She was constituted to realize all his eccentricity and buoyancy, all the gayer traits that distinguish him from his fellow class in other countries, if she felt less

his graver nature, of which she has traced but a single instance—though an instance, it must be acknowledged, that is very natural and affecting. Her experience, however, was limited. Her life allowed her only glimpses of the true condition of the peasant, and it was reserved for others who knew it intimately to supplement her traits, and place the man before us in all his vigour and completeness.

He was well entitled to such friends. The depository in most countries of the national characteristics, he was especially such in Ireland, where he alone perpetuated the national intensity. A hundred years of the Penal Code had effectually served to eliminate that distinction from other classes. The Catholic gentry who retained their property, and loved their land too much to quit it, had been crushed into a state of torpor that was as profound as it was humiliating. The middle grades engaged in business, commercial or agrarian, were only too thankful to be passive, as the condition of their security. The peasant alone preserved his Celticism, his old hilarious elasticity, which, as unbroken by disaster as it was unclouded by subjection, had not bent beneath the pressure of two centuries of wretchedness.

At the same time it is not strange that what had failed to quench his buoyancy should unhappily have had the power to develop his vindictiveness. However the Catholics had suffered generally by the devotion of their ancestors, the chief victim of their position was unquestionably

the peasant. The practical British serf, chained by misfortune to the soil, whom selfish laws condemned to poverty, and, still more cruelly, to ignorance, was reduced to one alternative, either to endure his fate in bitterness, or try to escape from it by crime. Evil is always reproductive, and outrage became to such a man the only remedy for grievance. It is scarcely, therefore, a wonder that when Banim, Griffin, and Carleton came to portray their humble countryman, they resolved to do him justice. They felt if it was their duty to place the darker aspects of his nature by the side of his brighter and better, not less was it incumbent on them to show the sources of his evil,—the system and the influences which had moulded and inflamed him, and turned to the worst uses a vehemence that might have been directed to the best.

Nor, again, is it surprising that as these writers were all Catholics, most of them had an object in their efforts that was something more than literary. They hoped their stories would create an interest in the condition of the luckless rustic, which would help to swell in England the cry for Catholic relief. Nationality was then a theme which was inseparable from politics—to show the peasant as he was, was to impeach the system that had made him so—fiction, therefore, was not the weakest means of sustaining argument by sympathy. By the side, however, of these writers were others who, quite as sensible of the force and imminence of Irish evils, were the less disposed to paint them, in the assurance that their removal was a mere

question of time ;—others who, less qualified to grasp the graver emotions of the peasant, were content to reproduce him in his gayer and happier moods, and even thus to do him justice by divesting him of the coarseness which had been so frequently imputed to him. At the head of these stands Lover—as conspicuous for his tastefulness as for his mirth and his vivacity, his stories worthily seconded the kindly purpose of his songs.

Such was the growth of Irish fiction, of which it is to be observed that it contrasts with that of Europe generally in one marked peculiarity—its novels refer to the upper classes, and its romances to the lower. In most cases reality belongs to the middle and inferior orders, whose necessities restrict them to its fixed and bounded level ; whilst romance becomes the privilege of the titled and the wealthy, who are so often tempted into extremes by the very monotony of their enjoyments. In Ireland, on the contrary, political and social causes had calmed down the aristocracy to an everyday existence, whilst romance had descended to the still ardent-hearted peasants, whose exceptional state of feeling was in itself so largely productive of exceptional events. Their intensified emotions lifted their reality up to the level of the higher and romantic moods of many colder-blooded countries. They also possessed a source of excitement in the native superstitions—in the directness with which their feelings could expand under their belief in supernatural displays. At the same time, under the pressure of their privations and inflictions

their romance was always serious, and at times intensely tragic—whether as shown in the formation of those remarkable societies with which they rose against exactions or made war on rival communions, or in the excited passions and the excesses that so often threw their shadow over the common current of their lives.

Of this extraordinary state of society, this truly singular admixture of the elevating and the degrading, the sagacious and the reckless, the painful and the diverting,—this grand era of excess, whether of indulgence on the one hand, or of reprisal on the other, which it is so agreeable to think Time has entirely swept away,—the national fiction remains the mirror. Reflecting nothing of the present, but collecting most of the features of an extinct social condition, this fiction may lay claim to some historical utility in its power to assist the student who would seek clearer solutions of some of the problems of its day. Viewed in a lower light, however, it can never want attraction. It must always continue to exist as a little gallery of curiosities which the lapse of time will only render more extraordinary and unique.

And now, proceeding to a closer survey of the leading distinctions of the native writers, who are we to acknowledge as their head?—Which is the novelist whose larger glass sweeps all classes of society into its ampler field of vision, and whose juster hand draws their varieties under all their shaping influences, historical or local? The popular belief of England has always settled on Miss Edgeworth.

The earliest in point of time, she has ever been regarded as also the first in point of merit. I venture to think that popular belief has been somewhat mistaken in this matter. Of the entire group of native writers, Miss Edgeworth is the least national. It is not merely as a painter of manners that she restricts herself so much to the purely fashionable classes (however charmingly, as in the portrait of Lady Geraldine in her *Ennui*), but that the peasant, whenever introduced as a relief to her elegant tracings, is drawn in lineaments so feeble as scarcely to be cognizable to Irish eyes.

Again, as a philanthropist who would correct the social evils of her country, who would improve the condition of landlord and tenant by exposing all that tended to deteriorate and estrange them, she carefully avoids referring to the most important of such causes—the religious and the political. She sees clearly all the mischiefs of idleness and improvidence, of ignorance and drunkenness, of rack-renting, middlemen, and other fruits of Absenteeism; but nothing whatever in the state of laws which had originated such evils, or had tended to sustain them. She is a physician who would remove eruptions without improving the state of the blood. It is easy to acknowledge her many excellencies, her calm sagacity and insight, her faultless taste, her delicate humour, her practical aim, her genial feeling, and, worthy of all, her charm of style, her terse incisive sentences, pointed and glittering as needles, but always threaded with some instructive or ameliorative purpose.

But she has neither passion nor imagination. She is wholly wanting in the temperament that unlocks the Irish character, that admits us to the mysteries of its intensity and changefulness, the joy and sorrow, love and hatred, buoyant mirth and reckless fury, which compose its strange diversity and must be felt in order to be depicted. It is this defect which gives her Irish sketches so often the didactic air of an essay, rather than the life and illusion of a story; which limits her to the more subdued and balanced traits of the upper classes, and even mingles with their portraiture so large a measure of Anglican features. In *Ennui* and *The Absentee* half the action lies in England, and English personages are made to figure quite as prominently as Irish.

It is in *Castle Rackrent*, however, that she chiefly betrays her inability to depict the Irish peasant. Whilst the details given by the old domestic present the most graphic picture possible of the social life of the last century, his language has scarcely a particle of idiomatic truth or colour. Again, in *Rosanna*, which contrasts so capitally the course of the two farmers,—the one to ease and competence, the other to want and abjectness,—the men themselves have as little Celticism as if they had been born across the Channel. It is only in *Ormond*, and its central figure, its admirable “King Corney,” that the national character gains at her hands something of its exuberance and fervour; yet even here the picture is still limited to its old aristocratic circle.

How strange, then, seems the well-known avowal of Sir Walter Scott, that it was her vivid painting of Irish life which led him to try his hand at Scottish. How strange that such a work as *Waverley* could have been prompted by a writer who has neither imagination, nationality, nor the least historical suggestion. Let us place her fame on its true basis. It is not in her Hibernian, but her English novels that she exhibits her real power; it is in her pictures of English character, English manners, English homes, and English sympathies—in her *Belinda*, her *Manœuvring*, her *Patronage*, and her *Helen*, that she so much charms whilst she instructs us, and takes her stand among the most engaging and enduring writers of her time.

There could scarcely be a greater contrast to Miss Edgeworth than Lady Morgan. Whether in their temperament or their talents, in their domestic and social experience, or their professional career, no two writers could exhibit a less measure of resemblance. They were alike but in one particular—their Irish father and English mother; but if the fountains were so identical, how divergent were the streams. To the Saxon mother belonged the one child, and to the Celtic father all the other. Lady Morgan was possessed of all the strong emotion, the abundant humour, the warm and plastic imagination in which her great rival was so deficient—if just as wanting in all the restraints of the latter's judgment, taste, and delicacy. She was one of the strongest in-

stances possible of the power and defects of a passionate nature. An ardour which ran into extravagance, and a courage that rose to audacity, gave her a confidence that scorned decorum and paid but small respect to art.

Honest, exemplary, and laborious, all her unquestionable merits were counterpoised by failings that made her as often society's target as she assumed to be its censor. She worshipped the aristocracy whilst cherishing republican sympathies, and she hungered for popularity whilst pretending to despise it. Some one had called her "the Irish De Staël," and this flattery, which she should have smiled at, she unfortunately believed in. She was not content to be a woman of genius, she was resolved to be thought a phenomenon—a comet that could traverse many spheres, rather than a star which could shine in one; and so she startled and astonished, caring but little how she enlightened.

Still, whatever may be thought of her as philosopher or statistician (as in her books on France and Italy), she was no pretender as a novelist, and in two of her tales, at least, asserts her right to take her place in the front rank of national fiction. We may dismiss her earliest effort, her *Wild Irish Girl*, as a mere instance of a girl's impulsiveness, even in its patriotic purpose; and we need not insist on her latest story, her *O'Briens and O'Flahertys*, since, though decidedly a work of genius—a tale as distinguished by its wit and character as by its proofs of elegant culture and curious historical research—still it

must be owned that in its pictures of the Irish Court in the past century, it is disfigured by offences against propriety and feeling.

No such objection, however, can be taken to her *O'Donnell*, and *Florence Macarthy*, which are as unexceptionable in point of taste as they are remarkable in regard to power. Their portrait painting is excellent. Save in her lion-hunting Lady Llanberis—who was, of course, the Countess of Cork, and whose hunger for notoriety was probably gratified by the freedom—all her characters are typical; they have nowhere the meagreness of mere individual transcription. Take, as a specimen, the group in the second chapter of *O'Donnell*—the busy, showy, Lady Singleton; the epicurean Vandeleur; and the eccentric governess, Miss Halloran;—or again, the contrast of the two companions in the opening of *Florence Macarthy*; the manly bearing, the ripened judgment, the widened sympathy of the poor exile, and the hopeless, aimless, powerless exhaustion of society's young favourite,—how terse and compact is the description, how living and cognizable the results.

The national history must excuse the monotony of all her heroes being patriots; and if her heroines have the fault of playing the old rôle of the guardian genius who watches over a lover in innumerable disguises, she freshens the conception with a humour that makes it particularly Hibernian. The mysterious, half-angelic, indefinable protectress, who becomes concrete in the reality

of the fat and hideous Miss Macgillicuddy, is certainly a phase of the idea that never dawned on its inventor. Again, how admirable is her dialogue. In her fashionable scenes especially, its brilliancy, its pleasantry, and its thorough knowledge of the world mingle with a sarcasm that, like a rapier, as suddenly pierces as it flashes. She fortunately had had access to such circles from her youth, and one of her distinctions is the clearness with which she marks her Irish gentry from her English—the ardour and *naïveté* of the one, the tempered reserve and more critical as well as graceful calm of the other.

When she descends to the middle classes, her drawing loses nothing of the warmth and sharpness of its touch. What can exceed the force and colour of the memorable “Crawley family”—the oily sycophantic spinster, the egotistic arrogant barrister, the crafty and heartless agent and attorney;—or, on coming to the peasantry, where is there anything more natural than her simple, easy, honest, trusty, warm-hearted Macrory; or more sublime in rags and scholarship than her hedge schoolmaster O’Leary; or, in contrast to them both, more impressive or affecting than her withered, famished, maddened, but still faithful and devoted Shane?

These tales have other merits. There is their power of comic invention, as shown in the “trial scene” of *Florence Macarthy*, so ludicrous in its incidents, and so dramatic in its evolution; and the “Jug day” of *The O’Briens*, that picture *par excellence* of old Irish hospitality,

which, alike in humour and reality, still acknowledges no superior. A last distinction is their purpose, which forms the strongest contrast of these stories to the spirit of Miss Edgeworth's—they are avowedly patriotic. They display the national evils only in order to expose their source, and out of a deeper sense of their wrong kindle the desire for their removal. They are the first attempt that was made in fiction to raise the cry for Catholic relief. Lady Morgan was a good Protestant, but she felt the claims of her burthened countrymen, and did not shrink from giving a proof of it when the assistance was most needed.

With all these merits, it is not surprising that she rose to be one of the most agreeable and popular writers of her time, and as little is it to be doubted that she was also one of the best abused. The acknowledged tenor of her Irish stories, and the freedom of her opinions in society, drew down on her an attack by the leading journals of the Government, which, in point of pitiless invective, has probably never been exceeded. She was called a Jacobin, libertine, and Atheist (a decorous member of the Church of England, who did not believe in Orange ascendancy!) her books were denounced as pestilent, and the public was almost warned against maintaining her acquaintance. This persecution, as might have expected, only defeated its own end. It doubled the sale of her books, and gave her additional *éclat* in society. It also roused no little admiration of the courage she displayed in fighting such a battle single-handed against her adversaries. At the same time.

it must be remarked that they were not all of the same fierceness.

It is no secret that her bitterest assailant was Mr. John Wilson Croker, a man whose capacity for railing was quite on a par with his general ability, and with whom the shaft of party vengeance seems, in this case at least, to have been a little barbed with personal feeling. He had been an intimate acquaintance of Lady Morgan in his youth; but for some reason or other had quarrelled with her,—his ill-will, according to her Memoirs, arising from wounded vanity in having been rejected by her as a suitor; whilst, agreeably to Mr. Fitzpatrick, the ablest champion of her cause, it was owing to literary pique, springing from the calm and crushing answer which she gave to Croker's earliest effort—his attack on the Dublin stage, published in 1804, under the title of *Familiar Epistles*, a satire that was more remarkable for its asperity than for its wit.*

The "whirligig of Time," however, brought round "its revenges," even to poor Lady Morgan. In 1829 Catholic Emancipation was carried by the very party whose journals had so cruelly abused her for supporting it. "The Quarterly Review," a few years afterwards, under the kindlier management of Mr. Lockhart, made her an honourable *amende* in the way it spoke of her *Woman and her Master*; whilst, meanwhile, she balanced matters with her old enemy, Mr. Croker, by reproducing him in full, in the "Counsellor Crawley" of *Florence Macarthy*—a portrait

* Lady Morgan, her Career, &c.

that was so lifelike in all its dominant particulars, that it almost afforded as much amusement to his friends as to his foes. She also revenged herself by a joke on him that was current at the time, and which, perhaps, is sufficiently characteristic to warrant my repeating it.

There was a strange mania in those days, among well-educated people, in regard to the battle of Waterloo. Some scores of them were infected with the extraordinary notion that they had discovered the right way of winning it. An eminent Scotch historian was not the only one who considered the victory "a fortunate mistake." The great Duke was sent to school by strategic genius in all directions, which clearly showed that, in point of science, he was irretrievably beaten, though in point of fact—and of British blood—oddly enough, he never knew it. Some one telling Lady Morgan that Croker was among the crowd who had contracted this delusion—"Oh, I can believe it," she exclaimed; "he had got his secret for winning the battle—he had only to clap his *Notes on Boswell's Johnson* in front of the British lines, and all the Buonapartes that ever existed could never have got through them."

But a third name is wanting to complete the group of Irish novelists—that of the vivacious and delightful Lever. If judged by his later works, it is easy to think him superior to either of his predecessors, simply because he combines so much that is distinctive of them both. He partakes so largely the sagacious insight and practical purpose of the one, in union with the hearty, buoyant,

joyous temperament of the other. He traverses, in common with them, the higher and middle grades of life (he is less successful with the lower); but with an ampler knowledge of the world, and of the political history of his time. And if, as a Protestant and a Conservative, he seems less sensible of the national endurances and claims, he is alive to faults on all sides, can weigh excuses with offences, and, whatever his race's failings, can as warmly and proudly as any one acknowledge all their offsets.

His stories are of two classes, and present the greatest possible contrast. In the earlier, which were commenced in the "Dublin University Magazine," about 1840, we have some of the most mirthful and uproarious narratives to be found in modern fiction,—narratives, indeed, of such a quality that they entitle him to be called the Irish Smollett. His *Harry Lorrequer*, *Charles O'Malley*, *Jack Hinton*, and some others are illustrations of the military and convivial life of Ireland, as it existed after the Union, and as it presented a brief revival of the old explosive comic romance which distinguished the past century. He gives us a series of adventures which, in the singular profusion of their duelling and drinking, their wagering and hoaxing, their frolicking and flirting, have such a riotous absurdity, such an ardour of extravagance, such an audacity of hilarious and ridiculous imposture, that all comment on them explodes in successive bursts of laughter. They are only capable of one criticism, and that is—their enjoyment.

And the style of these narrations is quite on a par with

their details. It positively gallops across the pages. It is literature on horseback riding down a capital joke. And as the style, so is the knowledge. These stories are as authoritative on horse flesh, on field sports, on claret, or on cookery, as they are a perfect *trade mecum* on that higher indulgence—an affair of honour. From the insult and the uproar, up to the loading of the pistols and putting the parties in position, nothing is wanting to complete the picture of this grand climax to a festivity. Truth is stronger, however, than fiction. Extravagant and improbable as these adventures have seemed to many, the pure products of a mirthful and exaggerating fancy, nevertheless they were realities which, beyond a certain colouring, owed nothing to invention. Their writer frankly tells us in the pleasant prefaces attached to a late edition of these stories, that he drew them all from actual life,—from the anecdotes he had gathered of a past state of society, throwing them on paper in the hope that they would serve to amuse others as much as they had done himself.

But all this is his first stage. In his second he gives us fictions such as the *O'Donoghue*, the *Knight of Gwynne*, and the *Martins of Cro Martin*, which enlarge into a width of social and transitional survey that place his capacity and sympathy on a far higher level. In these he traces the breaking up of the old landed families, partly in connection with political events, but chiefly through the old causes of family pride, ruinous neglect, and unbounded hospitality, with an affluence of knowledge and a varied mastery of

style that almost lift his social pictures into the dignity of history. Here we are transferred to higher platforms of character and sentiment, to the finer pleasure of inquisition into principle and motive, to the interest of elaborated schemes and of complicated issues.

The *O'Donoghue*, which is laid in the early period of the Rebellion, exposes the causes of its failure in the blind enthusiasm that prompted, and the treacheries that betrayed it, with a vividness and candour that I doubt have ever been exceeded. In the *Knight of Gwynne*—which is connected with the great event ensuing—the writing, always terse and humorous, grows witty and observant; and nothing can be happier than the conversations of the political intriguers engaged in the great scandal of bringing about the Union, the knowledge displayed of opposing selfisms, the way venality is masked, and tortuous courses are depicted. As for the characters, they are all portraits that have as much finish as diversity. The proud, impetuous Hugh O'Donoghue, burning with a sense of his fallen fortunes;—Kate, his cousin, with her Irish temperament softened by the graces of French refinement;—Mary Martin of Cro Martin, with her grand spirit of philanthropy;—Jack Massingbred and Tom Magennis, that companion pair of scapegraces;—and Lady Dorothea, always flushing with the heat of her high blood.

Or, again, the Knight of Gwynne, truest of all old Irish gentlemen, with his generous heart, his feeble will, his perfect manners, and his quiet bravery; Bagenal Daly

(Beauchamp Bagenal), with his solemn face and his jocund spirit, his courage almost savage and his affection almost womanly—Miss Daly, his blighted sister, with her loving heart beating unsuspected under her withered frame and haughty visage—and Hickman, fearfulest of misers, who, trembling on the verge of the grave, does not scruple to mimic death in order to compass his revenge ;—what reality and vigour rise up before us in each of these. The latter story has also the merit of some highly dramatic scenes. The old butler bidding farewell to the family portraits at midnight, and the aristocratic Lady Eleanor standing at bay in the village boarding-house, amidst its pack of vulgar occupants, are but two of the many incidents that will survive in the reader's memory.

Here I might pause with this brief notice of an admirable writer, whose numerous later works I have not space enough even to name, though all of them distinguished by wit, thought, and observation, but that I cannot help alluding to the one novel of a man whose genius was the very last to be suspected of such an effort—Charles Maturin. It must be a surprise to many of my readers that the sombre and grand imagination of this remarkable romance writer could descend to the sphere of reality and details of modern life, but after penning two historical stories, neither of which were very successful (*The Milesian Chief* and *The Wild Irish Boy*), he made a last literary effort in 1824, in the production of a novel entitled *Woman, or*

Pour et Contre. This, however, was intended to be a novel "with a purpose."

He had been combating all his life two redoubtable antagonists, Romanism and Calvinism,—the first because it warred with the claims of reason and the rights of conscience; the second because it inhibited mental refinement and the love of art. In his pulpit he had become celebrated as a controversial preacher, making many an impetuous attack on the prevalent belief about him; and now, in his novel, he assailed Calvinism as it invaded Dublin in his own day—cruellest and mournfulest of theologies, narrowest and dreariest of social systems. The story turns on the struggle of a poetic and impassioned youth, who wavers between the attractions of a gentle, affectionate girl that forms the centre of the Puritan circle, and of her unknown mother, an Italian singer, a woman of genius and refinement, who is a sort of expansion, in some particulars, of Madame De Staël's *Corinne*.

The contrast of these two beings and of the respective spheres that they inhabit—the pure religious spirit of the one darkened by the gloom of false restrictions, and the dazzling beauty of the other associated with all the radiance and freedom of art and intellect—is drawn with a master's hand, and heightened with all the resources of a highly accomplished mind. Still the story is very painful; its conclusion is actually tragic (the girl dying of a broken heart, and her mother, who had lost her in her infancy, reaching her side only to learn she had been her rival and

destroyer); and, apart from the heavy blows it deals at fanatical delusions, it is difficult to see its lesson—the claims of the two heroines being so admirably balanced that, in a truly Irish spirit, the "*Pour*" is given for both of them, and the "*Contre*" is against neither.

CHAPTER IX.

1836—1838.—Irish Fiction continued—National Romance Writers—Gerald Griffin—His superior Genius—His Romance of Life—His Dramatic Power—Ireland's Dramatic Eminence—State of the London Stage—Griffin's *Gisippus*—Mr. Macready—Irish Actors—English Fiction—The Minerva Press—Griffin's Impulse to National Romance Writing—His Sphere the Middle Classes—His first Attempt, *Holland Tide*—Its Characteristics, Humour, Moral Sympathy, &c.—*The Collegians* his Crowning Effort—Its Variety and Art—Conception of its Hero—His Crime and his Remorse—Its Incidents—The Stageen Race, &c.—Its Characters: Mrs. Cregan, Eily O'Connor, Hyland Creagh, &c.—Rapidity of its Production—John Banim and the Romance of the Peasantry—His sterner and intenser Genius,—*The O'Hara Tales*—Their Popularity—The Misery of the Irish Peasantry—Banim's Pathos—*The Nolans* and *Peter of the Castle*—Michael Banim John's Associate—*Crochery of the Bill-hook*, &c.—Banim's best Work *The Conformist*, an Illustration of the Penal Code—William Carleton the greatest Painter of the Peasant—The Prose Burns of Ireland—His *Traits and Stories*—The Ulster Creaghts—Carleton's Character Painting: Sally Macgowan, Parra Sashta, Hycey Burke, &c.—His Pathos—*Fandarenghe* his greatest Conception—*Val M'Clutchy*, *Emigrants of Ardara*, &c.—*Black Prophet*, a Tale of the Famine—His *Clarienet*, an Irish *Paul and Virginia*—Samuel Lover—Aim of his Stories—Distinctions of his Humour,—Its Refinement in his Songs—Its Robustness in his Stories—His *Legends and Stories*—Their Popularity—Their Mode of treating Fairy Mythology—King O'Toole and Little Fairly—"The Gridiron"—Kishogue, Barney O'Reardon, &c.—His Novels—*Rory O'More*—Rory the Ideal of the Irish Peasant—His *Handy Andy*, Prince of Blunderers—Its Characters: O'Grady, Murtoch Murphy, &c.—Its Incidents—Lover's Effect on his Contemporaries, Bianconi and Miss Edgeworth—Charles Young his "Special Public."

WHEN we turn from the group of novelists to the national romance writers of Ireland, we have very little difficulty in

deciding which is the superior. The genius of Gerald Griffin scarcely permits a moment's doubt. A poet, on the one hand, who has both passion and imagination, he can portray some of the most terrible as well as affecting of human struggles; a humorist on the other, he possesses that rarer quality which is both the medium of reality and source of insight into character. But for the strong religious convictions which tore him from the world at the moment his brilliant powers were arriving at maturity, there is very little doubt he would have become the national bard of Ireland, and have enriched our English literature with some of its noblest modern additions. It would be hard indeed to limit the possibilities of one who could write such a play as *Gisippus* before he had reached the age of twenty, and produce, only five years afterwards, such a romance as *The Collegians*.

It is true it may be said of him that his whole life was a romance. From his early boyhood, when he floated in his little boat upon the Shannon, and lay wrapt in golden dreams of celebrity and fortune, up to the time when, still a boy, he journeyed to London, an utter stranger, and carried his tragedies to listless managers, to have them pitilessly rejected;—when, condemned to the sheerest drudgery, and even at times to want of food, he met his wants without despair, and his temptations without debasement;—till on again, when success had crowned him, when fame and fortune were in his grasp, and he resigned them to devote himself to a life of pure benevolence, to the

teaching of poor children in a lay brotherhood at Cork,—his whole career was little other than an animated poem, the beautiful unfolding of a nature that was as unsullied as it was self-forgetful.*

The genius of Gerald Griffin was eminently dramatic. This was shown in the spirit of his stories, so many of which were adapted to the stage, and in the fact that all his earliest and most prized attempts were plays. It would seem that something of this faculty was inherent in the Celtic temperament. Spain and France, I need not say, have been the dramatic fountains of modern Europe, and certainly Ireland has not unworthily contributed to the spring that has flowed in England. She has produced a cluster of comic writers who remain as unrivalled in our own land as they are unsurpassed in any other—Congreve, Steele, and Farquhar, Goldsmith, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Kane O'Hara was the originator of burlesque on the English stage; Bickerstaff and Leonard Macnally were the founders of its comic opera; whilst in the first quarter of the present century all the tragic dramatists were Irishmen—Maturin, Shiel, and Banim, Sheridan Knowles; and I might add to them Sir Martin Archer Shee, whose noble play of *Alasco*, refused a licence by the Chamberlain on account of its liberal sentiments, was played in his defiance at the Surrey Theatre, and with very great applause.

The success of his distinguished countrymen must have

* Life by his brother, prefixed to his works.

stirred the ambition of Griffin to try his fate in London also, and when he arrived there in the autumn of 1823, all the yearnings of the poet were enforced by the zeal of the reformer. He found the theatres degraded into the merest vehicle for spectacle. On boards which were made illustrious by Kean, Macready, and Charles Young, the great attractions were studs of horses and real cataracts of water. *The Cataract of the Ganges* was the prime sensation of the day. As Charles Lamb pleasantly remarked, "Elliston had got a grand idea for an overflowing theatre." To rescue the stage from such debasement became to Griffin almost a passion; and if there were deficiencies in some of his plays which accounted for their rejection—a want of attraction in their subjects, or a want of skill in their development (dramatic construction being an art which even the highest genius must acquire), no such objection could have been taken to the exceptional merits of his *Gisippus*.

This, which was almost the earliest, as it was his greatest effort of the kind,—though not exempted from the ordinary fate of being sent back by the managers; after which it slumbered amidst his papers till two years after his death,—still could find, in Mr. Macready, a just appreciator of its claims, and by means of him could win one of the most decided triumphs of its time. Its touching story of a youth who surrenders his betrothed to his friend on discovering their mutual passion, and who lives to be deserted by that friend when in his need, is full of an

heroic, manly beauty, which only a true poet could feel, and a great actor could illustrate. It is pleasing to Irishmen to think it was so well interpreted by native blood,—Mr. Macready's superb ability having extended to our own day that striking display of art and passion which, for upwards of a century and a half, Ireland has bestowed on the English stage—Wilks, Quin, Lacey, Macklin, Sheridan, Mossop, Spranger Barry, Irish Johnson, and Tyrone Power, Mrs. Barry, Mrs. Woffington, Miss O'Neill, and the inimitable Mrs. Jordan.

But English fiction at this period seems to have been in as low a condition as the drama. Its romantic or poetic portion it derived mainly from the "Minerva Press," then at the height of its activity as the great fountain of the weird and wonderful—a sort of literary hot spring, which kept boiling over with turbid mixtures of Monk Lewis and Mrs. Radcliffe. "Anne of Swansea," its chief contributor, a sister of Mrs. Siddons, was as fertile as she was fearful, and poured out her copious horrors almost at the rate of five volumes a quarter. All this had greatly disgusted Griffin, who looked upon romance as another form of the poetic play, having the same capabilities for a moral and refining influence, with the advantage of larger scope for disquisition and detail. He seems, however, to have been uncertain as to how he should essay romance himself, till the success of the *O'Hara Tales* came to relieve him of the difficulty.

Those extraordinary stories were written, as I have

already indicated, in support of the movement for Catholic relief, Banim believing that some true pictures of peasant character and suffering might serve to rouse English attention, and possibly act on English justice. Whatever was their success imperially, there can be no question of their effect on Griffin. Their nationality was just the spark required to kindle his exertions, if his refined and ideal nature prescribed a certain channel through which his capacity must act. More a poet than a patriot, more affected by what was universal and enduring in his countrymen than what was special and political under the influence of passing systems, whilst feeling deeply the peasant's condition, he was less attracted to his sphere than to that of his own order—the rural middle class of Ireland, with its comparative culture and tranquillity, and which had also its romance in its traditions of strange events, that had roused at times its slumbering passions and lashed a peaceful current into momentary surges. Of such traditions were the stories of the *Collegians* and the *Aylmers*—pathetic memories that had long been cherished in remote and quiet neighbourhoods,—tenuous and delicate foundations, but on which the concreting touch of genius could build—at least in one case—an imperishable structure.

His first attempt was made in 1826, in a collection of legends called *Holland Tide*, which, though inferior as a whole, showed a power in their chief story, *The Aylmers of Bally Aylmer*, that augured highly for his future efforts. The *Tales of the Munster Festivals* (in 1828) did not dis-

appoint these expectations. With two exceptions only, they all refer to the middle classes, and, irrespective of their masterpiece, have abundant force of character—as witness the blighted pride of the withered, desolate “Half Sir ;” the enchanting grace and archness of the village beauty, Lilly Burne ; the sense of birth in the scoundrel Tobin, who hopes, wretch as he is, he may obtain “a proper funeral ;” and the shifting, waxlike pliancy of the vagabond Mun Maher. Their humour, also, is conspicuous,—as in the duel with the blunderbusses in the village street at midnight—an overflow of drollery worthy of the happiest mood of Lover. Their graver merits are distinguished by the powerful moral sympathy which, indeed, permeates and dignifies every fiction Griffin has written. Not the least is it to be detected in his only patriotic story, *Tracy's Ambition*, which so incomparably assails the Penal Code.

Whilst it exposes not only the oppressive action of the laws, but the way their violation was prompted in order that their action might be enforced, it shows no blindness to the failings, as well as the sufferings of the people by the type it draws, in Tracy, of the petty pride and social vanity which so often surrender substantial good for illusions that impoverish scarcely so much as they degrade. The moral sense, however, of the writer is seen in a higher field than this. In the shadowy domain of remorse, he may be said to move without a rival. Banim has depicted quite as powerfully the struggles and results of lawless passions ; but who, like Griffin, the expiations that relent-

less conscience exacts from crime. The writhings of Price Kinchela at the approaching fate of his victim; the agony of the Coiner's wife as she surveys the widening abyss of her guilt; and, above all, the horror of her husband as he rushes from the plundered chapel, and, aghast at his iniquity, believes he is pursued by avenging spirits;—when has imagination ever wielded a sharper scourge of retribution?

The Collegians—the great triumph of these interesting stories—is such, not only in virtue of its becoming the focus of their several merits, but because it exhibits so especially their primary distinction—it is the romance of the middle classes. That reserved and tranquil region, which had as yet been only glanced at, was now fairly explored, and shown to enfold in its seclusion all the old elements of Irish life—joviality, refinement, domestic virtue, family pride—however calmed down in their expression by political and other causes. Nothing can be more skilful than the way the poetic interest of the story is set amidst the social and local realities of its occurrence, and then framed again, as it were, in the outer peasant life surrounding it; whilst that framework itself is varied by being planted amidst the usages of Griffin's native province, Munster.

How marvellous are both the affluence and the variety of its particulars, and how admirable the art by which they are connected and developed. The attention were well excused if tempted to wander amidst such diversity, and yet

how speedily it settles on the central figure of the group—that most erring, yet most pitiable of all passionate and noble natures, whom Heaven had so richly gifted, and man had so much neglected; whom a false maternal love had abandoned to impulses it should have checked, or had only guarded with a pride that viewed appearances as virtue. How one is attracted by the art which, in tracing the fall of such a nature, from the first wrong to the devoted Eily, on to the dark suggestion of her removal, shows how easily a venial error may grow into a crime, and a crime may beget sophistries either to conceal guilt or to excuse it.

How one is moved also, and more deeply, by the vindication of the spiritual instincts in the remorse that rises in the offender, to find, even in its very secrecy, an acuter source of torment, which,—reviving with his penitence all his love for his unhappy victim, tears off all defence of self, and leaves him crushed and prostrate in the presence of his great cruelty. The spectacle would be too painful were it not for the poetic skill which makes his punishment redemptive, and through the cleansing throes of suffering restores the fallen one to our sympathies. Equally admirable is the way in which the shadows of the story are broken by gleams of gaiety and spirit. With what vivacity its action opens amidst the mirth and stir of Garry Owen, and what humour and buoyant incident interweave its course throughout; its duelling and drinking scenes; its inimitable “staggeen race;” its rescue of the hunted hunchback.

But parallel to all of this is the force of character with which it animates, in token of the new and fruitful region it is traversing. The stately, strong-willed Mrs. Cregan—the graceful, cultivated Anne—the gentle Eily, sweetest image of all that is simplest and most devoted in womanly affection—Hyland Creagh, the buck and duellist, sunk into the rural *bon-vivant*, whose jollity can kindle so easily into all his former savagery—Kyrle Daly, with his simple manhood and his quiet sense of truth and honour; and, moving in the grade below them, the quaint and diverting Looby Lowry—the loquacious Foxy Dunat—the simple fervent Miles na Coppaleen—and the Celtic clannish Danny Mann, whose devotion, almost dog-like, is only to be exhausted by an outrage that at last turns the dog into a wolf,—where shall we find in any fiction a group whose outlines are more definite, whose colour more rich and natural, or whose expression more distinctive?

The only marvel that can be compared to the contents of such a story, and that a story, be it remembered, as impressive in its lesson as it is unsurpassed in its detail, is the rapidity of its production. Genius was never more attested by the trait of spontaneity. Griffin, in speaking of it to a friend, calls it “a story that writes itself.” And his brother, who was staying with him at the time of its composition, states that he wrote it mostly of a morning, whilst the printer’s boy was waiting; throwing off page after page without stopping to revise, or, indeed, scarcely to read it.*

* Life, p. 287.

With this effort expired his genius. The growth of his religious feelings stamped an increasing air of weakness on everything that followed it—his *Duke of Monmouth*, *The Invasion*, *Tales of a Fury Room*, etc.; the only exception being a boys' book called the *Christian Physiologist*, written on the subject of the senses, and with great cleverness as well as interest. The stage was, of course, abandoned. He had produced a little drama, called the *Noyades*, founded on the event in the French Revolution; but all his unacted plays, save *Gisippus*, were given to the flames. If estranged, however, himself, he supplied materials enough to others. His "Coiner" was produced as the "Robber's Wife," at Covent Garden—his "Card Drawing" as "Presumptive Evidence," at the Adelphi, for T. P. Cooke—his "Aylmer" was the foundation of Mr. Lovel's clever play of "Love's Sacrifice"—whilst *The Collegians*, after crowding the London theatres as "Eily O'Connor," has renewed all its old attraction in the recent success of the "Colleen Bawn."

To Griffin, then, we owe the romances of the Irish middle classes. With John Banim, and his brother Michael, came the romances of the Irish peasantry. Less imaginative and refined than Griffin, and wholly wanting in his humour, Banim was constituted to see the peasant only on his passionate and tragic side—only as he existed in storm and tumult, or the prostrations of deep distress; and with the special end he had in view—to rouse attention to his rustic subject—it cannot be doubted that his

limitation was an enlargement of his power. It was the source of that intensity with which he reproduced the terrible struggles and convulsions of rural life, and lifted their sad realities up to the level of romance.

A miniature-painter originally, and an early friend of Griffin, whose efforts he seems to have stimulated both as dramatist and novelist, he also came to London to make his outset with a play—his pleasing *Damon and Pythias*—and, more fortunate than his friend, he got his play produced, though some years followed its success, and much hard literary work, before he won his true position as the author of *The O'Hara Tales*. There must be many living still who can recall the sensation they created. It is not too much to say that nothing so marked had occurred in London since the first impression of the Waverley novels. Whatever attention had been drawn to Ireland by Miss Edgeworth and Lady Morgan was entirely diverted by the latter incomparable fictions, which left the public so little power for either enjoyment or expectation from any other quarter. The only chance of a counter attraction lay in the novelty or force of a distinct nationality, with its new trains of ideas, and possibly fresh sources of sympathy; and this, in a measure, Banim accomplished in the way he opposed to Scotland, and its poet's tracings of the past, unhappy Ireland in all the stern and affecting features of the present.

Irish romance, which, as I have said already, had descended in the past century from the upper classes

to the lower, had become tragic under the influence of religious and political causes, and so had stamped its extraordinary features on the calamity and outrage which did so much to prepare for and impel the Insurrection, and, after that, to raise and strengthen the cry for Catholic relief. If it was in order to make that cry more articulate to English sympathies that Banim penned romances which best displayed the rural classes, it must be remembered that in so doing he had a double end in view ; it was not merely to unveil their wrongs, but to indicate their misery. The Irish peasant, up to this period, had been popularly known to England only as a mass of savage turbulence or a model of absurdity. He existed only to attack authority, or to convulse the world with laughter. There were comparatively few who knew there was a third aspect to his case—that, while affording all this diversion in a novel or a farce, he was enduring an amount of wretchedness which had scarce a parallel in Europe.

There was a pinching want, a hopeless struggle, a long monotony of grief and hardship in parts of Ireland at the time, that England knew as little of generally as she did of the virtues that sustained them—the strong affection, the calm endurance, the patient, uncomplaining sacrifice which had converted into a temple many a desolate Irish cabin. Banim was peculiarly qualified to reproduce such facts as these, since, in addition to his intimate acquaintance with their scenes, he possessed a quality that was of paramount importance to his task—he had a

genuine fund of pathos. Stern and rugged as was his genius, it was not denied its springs of feeling.

As an evidence of this gift, I need but point to his touching picture of the young priest in *The Nolans*, sitting, after his marriage, with his wife, silent and heart-stricken at his sin, and slowly wasting under the want which so speedily assails them : or to that of the penitent in *Peter of the Castle*, who seeks to expiate his early crimes by silent and meek endurance of years of contumely and suffering. It is a great question, I think, whether his pathetic scenes, after all, were not among his most successful. Startling and riveting as were felt to be his sterner and convulsive struggles, many were repelled by their gloom and painfulness ; others objected to their want of taste ; but to his quieter and tenderer appeals, few indeed refused their sympathy. At the same time, it is a striking testimony to the truth and vigour of his stories—that when he adapted them to the stage, they were refused a license until he consented to lay their scene in other countries. Their picture of Ireland was felt to be too vivid and enkindling. Thus, under the title of the “Last of the Guerillas,” his “John Doe” was transferred to Spain ; while his “Sergeant’s Wife,” founded on *The Nolans*, and made memorable by Miss Kelly, was carried across to France.

Here, however, I must refer to an interesting discovery. Michael Banim, who figures as the “Abel O’Hara” of these fictions, was always regarded in the light of his brother’s assistant and subordinate, who merely contributed

to the stories their local and social illustrations; but in Duffy's edition of the *Tales* published in 1865, the fact is stated by their author that four of the most important of the number were due exclusively to Michael's hand—*Crohoore of the Bill-hook*, with its ingenious and thrilling interest; *The Mayor of Windgap*, with its varied character; *The Fetches*, with their depth of psychological inquisition; and *Father Connel*, with its most natural and lovable portrait of a Catholic Priest, which has well won for it the title of the "Irish Vicar of Wakefield." This is, of course, no small subtraction from the reputation of John Banim, and, indeed, may lead many to think that Michael, after all, was the greater genius of the two.

Other works, however, may be referred to which repair in some measure the loss. If in the *Boyne Water* and *The Denounced* John attempts the path of Scott, only to show, as might be expected, how far he falls behind him,—in the peasant sketches of *The Croppy* he exhibits all his early power; and in his crowning effort, *The Conformist*, he contributes to native fiction one of its most original and touching specimens. It is founded on those infamous enactments of the Penal Code, which forbade Catholic parents to have any but Protestant teachers for their children, and which also enabled any of their communion who "conformed" to the established faith to strip his parents of their property. Its hero, a Catholic youth who has been deprived of education under the above legal iniquity, becomes jealous of a brother who has been

educated abroad, and who, he believes, robs him not only of the affections of the girl he loves, but even of those of his parents, and, goaded by this delusion, rushes into Conformity with the view of beggaring the beings whom all the while he almost worships.

This most startling and affecting picture of injustice and of suffering is drawn in colours that are so natural, so simple, and so attractive, that its effect is just as subduing as it is at the same time inflaming against the system it exposes. Oddly enough, however, as it was on the point of proceeding from the press, the great Relief Bill was carried, whereupon Banim, merely moderating a few of its expressions, inscribed it to the Duke of Wellington, "the great Emancipation Minister," against whom and whose party its composition had been levelled.

But the peasant life of Ireland has been illustrated by a still more distinguished pen than Banim's—that of William Carleton; a man whom, in his own sphere, I cannot help regarding as the greatest genius Ireland has produced. For every requirement of that sphere he possessed some adaptation—imagination, humour, pathos, knowledge, vehemence, and delicacy. There was not an aspect of the peasant that he could not reproduce successfully, if there were certain moods which most attracted him, and that he was best able to develop. He had all the poetic tenderness of Griffin in his exquisite rustic love-scenes; all the intensity of Banim in his pictures of crime and sorrow,—as witness the terrors of the traitor Flanagan, and the appal-

ling curse of the evicted Widow ; and, on the other hand, he could expand into the richest exuberance of Lover,—as in his immortal inquest on *Barney Bradley*, when the corpse suddenly reviving at a blow from one of the jurymen, knocks down the coroner, and, in turn, demands an inquest upon him.

William Carleton, in his peasant origin, his varied genius, his drudging life, and his convivial spirit, might with little impropriety be called the Prose Burns of Ireland. He had all the same mixture of emotions, the same contempt for fraud or falsehood, the same regard for home affections, and the same knowledge of the usages and traditions of the peasantry, which befitted him to tell in story what the great lyrist poured out in song. Hence it is that, with all his large imaginative power, it is to him we are indebted for the reality of rustic life, as it is to Banim we owe the romance. Passing his days among his fellow cotters up to his twenty-second year, when he bent his steps to Dublin in order to support himself by literature, it is he who gives us his humble countrymen in all the daily and simple current of their pleasures and their sorrows, their sympathies and their enmities, their toils and superstitions, with a minuteness and completeness that can never be surpassed.

Carleton had also his own locality. What Munster was to Griffin, and what Leinster had been to Banim, northern Ulster was to him. The "Ulster Creaghts," as they were termed, were for the most part mountaineers, who, in virtue

of their isolation, had preserved the distinctive features of their Celtic origin unimpaired; and it is these which he sets before us in his maiden effort, his *Traits and Stories*, with such wonderful fidelity, whilst giving us glimpses of his youth,—as in the sketch of *The Poor Scholar*—the feeling and naturalness of which have so often been appreciated.

Carleton was limited, as I have said, to the area of real life; but it must be owned that, within that boundary, no mind could be more creative. He could imagine types of character as remarkable as any in modern fiction, if he had little power of constructing stories with the art displayed by Banim, or of inventing exciting incidents in order to give them animation. Sally MacGowan, the prophet's daughter, with her fierce, stormy, generous nature, left to run riot by neglect, or rendered savage by ill usage, yet melting into affection at a word or look of kindness, has a stamp of nationality that is apparent at a glance; and so also has that prince of sluggards, the inimitable Parra Sashta, with his abhorrence of all improvements, and devotion to the dirt and squalor of his easy-going ancestors. Scarcely less striking is his M'Clutchy, truest specimen of Ireland's old master scourge, a middleman,—Skinader, the usurer, who masks his cruelty under pretences of benevolence,—Hycey Burke, who robs his father, but still is a gentleman, because he keeps a hunter,—Kate Hogan, the tinker's wife, stained with every debasement but impurity,—and last, not least, Fardarougha, sublimest creation of a miser—with love and avarice, like

angel and devil, struggling for possession of his soul, till suffering comes to love's assistance and drives out the evil spirit.

An imagination which exhibits all this range as well as force, would have alone conferred on its possessor an eminent distinction; and yet, extraordinary as it is, it is not superior to his pathos. His *Fardarougha*, I venture to think, is the most pathetic tale in the language. The man himself—the most original conception in Irish fiction—is treated with a mastery that is as startling as it is curious and enthralling. The love that equally possesses him for his son and for his gold, and the tortures that convulse when the one is weighed against the other, are alike so human and so revolting, so pitiable and so degrading, that, denounce as we may the wickedness, we cannot but commiserate the culprit—whilst the parting scenes of the lovers, and those of the imprisoned youth with his parents, heightened by the religious submission of the one, and the frantic, almost impious vehemence of misery in the other, have an intensity of pitcousness that I know not where to find exceeded. And akin to these is the portrait of the gentle and tender Mave nursing her rival when left to perish in a hut of a contagious fever, and hearing herself denounced amidst the ravings of the sufferer; the picture of the dead girl and her baby; and of the old farmer, who is about to emigrate, bidding farewell to his wife's grave. These are but a few of the exquisite instances of their author's command over the emotions.

Carleton has written altogether as many as twenty distinct works, all of which in a great measure exemplify his genius, if there are some whose mistaken aim renders them as a whole less satisfactory. One of his most extraordinary books is his *Valentine M'Clutchy*, the completest epitome of Irish grievances that was ever put on paper. It brings to a focus every mischief that had ever delayed the national progress, and pauperized or exasperated a miserable peasantry. Never before was the operation of Absenteeism, Orange influence, tenant neglect, and kindred evils, so vigorously depicted or so mournfully enlivened by the terrible vivacity of assize courts, police hunts, eviction raids, and gale days. In other stories he forcibly illustrates some particular injustice, as in the *Emigrants of Ardara*, which shows the working of the land system; or *The Tithe Proctor*, which exhibits that of the injurious Church impost. Nevertheless, whilst thus assailing all the exotic wrongs of Ireland, he can denounce just as heartily her many evils that are indigenous; he can picture the follies and the vices, as well as the virtues, of the peasantry, and with no meanness of disguise, for fear of losing the world's respect.

How admirable, in *Reddy the Rover*, is his exposure of Ribbonism and the spy system; and, in *Art Macguire*, of the curse of drunkenness, the great disaster of his country,—a story which Father Mathew called "the finest temperance tract ever written." Equally serviceable was his *Parra Sashta*, in its happy satire on Irish indolence

and agrarian superstitions, which, in addition to its ingenious plot—the clever reforming projects of its heroine—is so full of practical knowledge as well as entertaining character. In contrast to them all is his *Black Prophet*, illustrative of the famine of 1817, with its terrible pictures of the stricken groups, in solitary huts and silent villages, slowly wasting with their agonies, or suddenly maddening to desperation; but with their horrors ever softened by gleams of heroic love and tenderness, or the deep religious feeling that so worthily distinguishes the Irish peasant. And apart from this, again, stands his picture of the two orphans, in his story of *The Clarionet*—a sort of Irish *Paul and Virginia*, where we have some of his exquisite love-scenes, which, in their naturalness and purity, have an effect that is quite idyllic. Carleton, like Banim, was persuaded to attempt the portrayal of the upper classes, and, in like manner, as entirely failed. He is only himself among the peasantry. Like Antæus, he is a giant who, to renew his strength, must touch the ground.

I have now concluded my brief survey—not in ignorance that there are many others who have ably contributed to Irish fiction, but because I think I have cited all whose acknowledged eminence entitles them to rank as standards of comparison. In what relation then to these exemplars stand the claims of Samuel Lover? In order to answer such a question, it is first necessary to determine the exact dimensions of those claims, and then, by means of a few comparisons, arrive at his true position.

Simply facetious as are Lover's stories, it must be always borne in mind that they had a purpose under their merriment, which bestows on them some dignity. They had the purpose of his songs. They were written, as I have said, if not to advocate the rights or paint the sufferings of the peasant, at least to renovate his character,—to divest him of the vice and coarseness which had been so repugnant to English sympathy, and so do something to abate one of the prejudices against his country. To this end Lover required only the endowments of taste and humour, and these he possessed to an extent which fairly placed him abreast of the best men of his time. He has other merits, of course, but they are not of the same importance. He has observation, if it is not extensive, and if it is chiefly confined to rustic circles. He has not many types of character, but they are all vigorous and well-defined, and serve as admirable media for his exhilarating faculty. Again, if he is not distinguished by any great constructive skill—his larger stories, like Lever's early ones, being masses of adventures rather than developments of interest—he has great invention of comic incident, of those little *imbroglios* and surprises, those sudden dead-locks and quandaries, by which character is so much unfolded and humour is so much evoked.

At the same time, it must be remembered that, if his stories are purely humorous,—if, with one exception only, they have not a trace of grave emotion,—it is not because his mirthful nature was devoid of such an element; it is

simply owing to the way in which he sorted his emotions. Whilst Griffin, Carleton, and others could be grave and gay alternately, could pour their humour and feeling like twin streams upon one page, it was Lover's peculiarity that he confined his humour to his prose, and remitted his serious feeling, as a distinct matter, to his poetry. Always facetious in the one, he was tender and pathetic only in the other. Of the power he could show in the latter, I have quoted some proofs in a previous chapter; but his three Metrical Tales are a stronger instance even than his songs. Here he combines a depth of feeling with a novelty of incident that are really startling to the reader who is only ordinarily acquainted with his works. His *Father Roach*, originally given in the first series of his Legends, but transferred with so much advantage to the more fervid sphere of verse, is peculiarly affecting.

The worthy priest has received the confession of the murderer of his brother, and under its seal of sacredness cannot denounce the wretch to justice, but is condemned to endure for many years both his presence and his secret, till accident, or rather Providence, leads to his betrayal, and the culprit's seizure. Told with a simple, quiet earnestness, that loses nothing of its force by the occasional playful spirit that adds so much to its reality, one cannot read this little romance without a thrill of pleasant surprise at its revelation of a power so little suspected in the writer. The tale of the generous fisherman who rejects the wealth that would have won him a bride, in order to save a fellow-

being, is a companion picture of interest; whilst in *The Blacksmith*, Lover rises to a height that is almost tragic. The wretched Phadrig who has been exiled by the arts of a villain, the betrayer of his sister, and who returns to obtain his vengeance at the hands of that sister's son, is a tale of suffering and hoarded emotion as powerfully told as it is conceived, and which reaches a climax, in the death of the criminal, that is singularly impressive.

Still, if these ballads must be regarded as the unsealing of a fountain which, if Lover had chosen to keep flowing, would have added materially to his fame, it is by his humour he must be estimated—the peculiar power by which he is known—and what, it may be asked, is its principal distinction? In his peasant songs, as I have shown, that distinction is refinement. There humour allied to poetry necessarily submits to all the influences of its delicacy and grace; but in prose, the lowlands of reality, his mirth regains its freedom, and bounds away with no restraint save the invariable one of taste. Here its characteristic is robustness. It has a heartiness that is as much too natural for elegance on the one hand as it is for coarseness on the other. It is the facetious spirit in full health. It has the light step, the quickened pulse, the ruddy look of a vivacity that is as eager to display as it is unable to exhaust itself. It is nothing reflective or suggestive, nothing dexterous or ingenious, that opens up the finer traits or subtler motives of the man. It has none of the cleverness of Lever or the sarcasm of Lady Morgan, or

the calm and graceful pleasantry that forms the humour of Miss Edgeworth. It is, in contrast to them all, a strong, honest, wholesome drollery, that takes Pat just as he shows himself—just as he laughs, and leaps, and capers; that grips his hand and claps his back, as “a good, honest boy enough,” whose heart is always in his mouth, and whose mouth, in honour of such a tenant, is just as open and capacious.

Why Lover was restricted to this one particular sphere, it would be difficult to say. What attracted him to Pat, or how he came to know him so well, when he encountered him so rarely,—when all his knowledge of him was gained during his brief summer holidays, or the other flying visits he was able to snatch from his work in Dublin,—certainly puzzles one as much as why he was never tempted to depict the life that lay about him—the fashionable and middle classes with which he was daily placed in contact, and whose abundant eccentricities he was so well able to appreciate. Stranger still, as many have thought, is the circumstance that he saw so little in the populace of Dublin,—that especial region of the ludicrous, of which he has given us but a single specimen, in his capital *New Pityatees*.

All this is strange enough; but, strange or not, there is the fact that it is the peasant, and the peasant only, who was the object of his sympathy. Paddy, careless as he is coinless, grandest instance of equilibrium, with a heart as sure to fill as his pocket is to empty,—Paddy, bare as

his own mountains, but free and gushing as their streams,—was to him the only fountain of the national jocosity. To what a depth he managed to drink of this exhilarating spring I can have no occasion to say. Public opinion has long proclaimed it in the success of his *Legends and Stories*, his earliest and still, to many, his most mirth-inspiring efforts—productions which, I venture to think, will ever continue to be numbered among the richest and most enjoyable of all Hibernian illustrations.

Not the least distinction of these stories is the model method they present of dealing with the fairy lore of Ireland. How the humour of the native Elf—a true Irishman, every inch of him—gets interpreted and expanded in such delightful compositions as *King O'Toole*, and *Little Fairly*—the latter, happiest instance of the mastery of mind over matter,—*Paddy the Sport* and his sagacious fox, who could either smoke the keeper's pipe or set fire to his mattress,—or the determined *Fairy-finder*, who beat the obdurate doctor into believing himself a spirit. Then their admirable companions, the matchless *Gridiron*, luckless *Kishogue*, the terrible *Cow that ate the Piper*; and above all, *Barny Reardon*, loftiest example of a navigator, who piloted into port the ship that showed him the way home. What insights are all these into Hibernian idiosyncrasies—into that strange, delightful mixture of comic fancy and emotion which sets us wondering, one might say, almost as much as it diverts us.

But Lover has also written novels—extended stories in

three volumes, in which he has ascended from peasant life to the grade that is just above it; but which, as they have neither a love interest, social purpose, nor development of any kind, make not the least pretension to art, but are mere masses of adventures held together by a personal thread, and sustained by his unflagging humour. Setting aside *He would be a Gentleman*, a tale of the Irish Brigade, which, though spirited and clever, is too foreign in its scenes and incidents to deserve the name of national, I need not enlarge on *Rory O'More*, suggested by the great success of his lyric, and which, laid in the time of the Rebellion, so cleverly escapes all participation in its terrors and excesses.

If its characters must be said to be rather sketches than finished drawings (the schoolmaster, the tinker, the smuggler De Welskein, &c.), it has some admirable incidents, such as Rory's adventure in the Colonel's house, where, mistaken for the servant's husband, he is enabled to escape the guard and to gain some information which helps him to escape the Colonel also. Rory himself, however, is the book. Hearty, honest, comic, sensible, tender, faithful, and courageous, he is the true ideal of the Irish peasant—the humble hero who embodies so much of the best of the national character, and almost lifts simple emotion to the same height as ripened mind. Lover has written nothing that affirms more worthily either his sympathies or talent.

Handy Andy, however, is his triumph. Here his humour is developed to the full flow of its exuberance,

and offers for the loss of sentiment no small enlargement of diversion. Handy Andy is Rory's antipode. He is as true a synonyme of matter as the latter is of spirit,—as dull and ponderous in brain and body as his engaging co-mate is gay and buoyant. At the same time he is as much a type. He is an example of that tolerably numerous and venerable section of his countrymen, whose thoughts are always in a state of mixture, and never in a state of settlement. Handy Andy is a blunderer; consequently he is the chosen victim of ill-luck. Always blundering, he is always expiating, either in person or in pocket. A veritable football of fortune, who is kicked about on all sides, his only offset is his Celtic element, which always ensures him a rebound.

Andy's blunderings, however, are managed with great art, since they mostly complicate the story, and have a use beside their merriment,—such as when he drives the election agent to the house of the wrong candidate, and the man, a vilifier of the Irish, gets a serviceable lesson; or when he jams a couple of bullets into the duelling pistol of his master, in order to ensure him a good shot, and the weapon, refusing to go off, compels an amicable settlement. Again, the character painting is excellent. What can be richer than the portrait of that human hurricane O'Grady, the drinking, fighting, swearing, roaring, foaming squire of the past century, with his crazy tottering house turned into a castle against bailiffs, and his guard effectively constituted of a pair of hungry bull-dogs—or of Murtoch Murphy, the little,

jovial, sporting, electioneering lawyer, as good at a bottle or a badger-fight as at the worst case for a client—or the dowager Mrs. Grady, with her court memories and her turban weathercock—or the buxom Widow Flanagan—or the irrepressible Miss Gussy? All these are specimens of portraiture which are only approached by the best pencilling of Carleton and of Lever.

Equally admirable are the incidents. The discovery of Miss Gussy under the bed of the English visitor, where she had been suddenly forced to hide herself at the approach of her fiery father; O'Grady's rage; her mother's dismay; and Andy's alacrity in running for pistols at the demand of his maniac master, make up a scene that is scarcely to be matched out of the best pages of Smollett. The adventure also at the inn, where Murphy steals the boots of the electors, and so prevents their coming to the poll, is laughable in the extreme; whilst the entire picture of the election is so vigorous and lifelike, gives so faithfully its features in all their absurdity and uproar, paints its *mêlée* with such exactness, and fills its speakers with such drollery, that I doubt it has its counterpart in Irish or any other fiction.

Lover's power was acknowledged in various ways by his contemporaries. The reading of *The Gridiron* had such an effect on Bianconi, the car proprietor, that it suggested to him the wooden grating which, for the convenience of travellers, he placed on his vehicles in wet weather. Miss Edgeworth informed Lover that his stories

were an unfailing panacea for her headaches ; and Charles Young, whose sense of humour was quite as great as of dramatic character, called himself Lover's "special public." "I am always," said he to the latter, "lending your books to my acquaintance, and as they never think of returning them, I am always buying new ones."

CHAPTER X.

1836—1846.—Lover's Settlement in London—Notice of him in "Blackwood"—His Reception in English Society—His want of Egotism—His Social Inspirations—Wits of Society, and Humorists—Lover's Pleasantry: two Instances—Lover's Labours as a Dramatist—The *Olympic Picnic*, a Christmas Novelty—*The Beau Ideal* and *Liston*—*Rory O'More* and *Tyrone Power*—His Operettas and other Pieces—The Value of his Irish Dramas—Power his best Interpreter—The Merits of the Latter as an Actor—His Literary Talent and his Humour—His Rejoinder to Charles Kean—Lover's further labours as a Painter—Portrait of the Moulvie Ishmael Khan—Of Lord Brougham as Lord Chancellor—David Roberts' comment on his Nose—Portrait of Thalberg, the Pianist—His admiration of Lover's Music—A Portrait Painter's Drudgery—Lover's Likenesses of Children—His Miniature of Russell Moore, the son of the Poet—His Etching a new Talent—Its Cost—His weakened Sight, and Abandonment of Painting—The Rise of Photography and End of Miniatures—Lover least known as an Artist—Why?—Private Life of Miniatures in comparison with Oil Paintings—Lover's Literary and Social Life—Connection with "Bentley's Miscellany" and the "Dublin University Magazine"—The Public Dinner to him at Grillon's—Friendly Assemblies under his own Roof—Mrs. Jameson—Miss Landon—Tom Campbell—Charles Young—David Roberts—Dr. Croly—Father Prout—Ingoldsby Barham—Douglas Jerrold—The Latter's Witticisms on Albert Smith—George Robins, etc.

LOVER's migration to the great metropolis, when he had almost reached his fortieth year, was in all practical respects such a complete second start in life, such a wheeling round in the midst of a race, in order the better

to recommence it, that the warmest of his admirers must have had some doubts of his success. It was not merely that he had obtained already profitable patrons and business connections, and had gathered to his side all the serviceable, if limited, influences of native and local sympathy; but that he threw himself into an arena where the competition was so much severer—where success seemed to be acquired only by the longest and intensest efforts, or gifts and powers the most commanding. It says much, therefore, both for the ability and perseverance he displayed, that in a couple of years at most, he should have made good his new position—should have established himself as a painter with a very fair amount of patronage, and both in literature and music should have made a marked impression.

As some evidence of the extent to which his claims had become acknowledged, I may mention the little circumstance that he was included in the "Gallery of Celebrities," published in "Frazer's Magazine"—the drawings of which were executed by his fellow countryman, Maclise; and, further, was the subject of a special notice in the renowned "Maga" of the North, written, I believe, by Dr. Maginn.

"A new poet in our day is a discovery worth recording, but a new poet who is also a musician, painter, and novelist is quadruply worth wondering at. This is the case of Mr. Lover, a young Irishman who has lately made his appearance on this side of the Channel. He is an artist of such skill as to have produced the very best small

portrait (that of the Ambassador of the King of Oude) at the last year's Exhibition, at Somerset House. He has written some short but witty dramas, and some volumes of Irish stories which, we believe, are very clever, and are worthily illustrated by some sketches from his own pencil. But his songs are now the topic. We confess we have not been much captivated by what has passed for Irish song-writing in England. Those songs which profess to be humorous, the playhouse pieces especially, are absolutely barbarous,—the essence of vulgarity, unrelieved by anything that bears the slightest resemblance to humour, in Ireland or any other country whatever. Even the amatory songs which have had their day among us have not altogether stolen our hearts. They have treated of love alternately like a schoolmaster and a schoolboy. They had none of the intense feeling—the flush of fever—the mixture of sadness and playfulness—the delight and also agony of true inspiration. In the songs of the present writer, we find much of the rich caprice, and not a little of the force of passion.”*

If such was his success professionally, not less favourable was the reception Lover met with in society. He came to England with all his genial and enlivening powers unimpaired—his flood of spirits; his ready humour; his talent, vocal and dramatic—and if these rarely failed to communicate their impetus, the result was far more to his credit than their effect had been at home. In Ireland

* “Blackwood’s Magazine,” vol. xli. 1836.

he met with audiences who were always prepared to be delighted, people whose social susceptibilities resembled them to mines, ready charged for explosion, and only waiting for the spark; but in less vivacious England, if the explosion was as hearty, the train had to be laid, and the ignition was rather slow. A great secret of his success, however, was that it developed so little egotism. Perhaps there never was a man who had been so much petted by society, and yet was so little spoiled by it.

Usually the idol of the *salon* taxes his worshippers pretty heavily with the self-esteem they have engendered. He gets an appetite for flattery as great as an Esquimaux's for blubber. He is not merely to be fed with it; it must be thrust down his throat till he seems to sink under the delicacy. Lover, however, if not indifferent to the applause and attentions he elicited, seemed always so thoroughly pleased to meet with people who enjoyed themselves, that, so his singing and talking assisted them, he was perfectly content. There is another explanation. Society, as I have said already, not only delighted but inspired him. Whatever he gave to it he gained from it, in an increased power of exertion. Often, on his return home from a party at an early hour in the morning, instead of going to bed like others, his daughter tells us he would sit down to his piano or his easel, and either complete an unfinished task or strike out some new conception. Whilst diverting crowds of people, he had been gaining new ideas! His social life, in fact, was only a part of his professional.

I have spoken of his humour in society. Clever writers are not invariably the cleverest of talkers. Either they exhaust themselves in their work, or they grow reserved when they unbend, and imagine every circle that they enter is a public. Even the wits of society, the professed *discours de bon mots*, who have made it their business to enliven the worlds of culture and of fashion, have rarely, I imagine, relied solely upon impulse. They have found a little preparation on the topics of the hour a very needed and effective stimulus to jaded powers of invention. Sheridan, it will be remembered, was a striking instance of the fact. According to his friend Moore, he lay in bed half the day in order to concoct jokes for the night. But Sheridan was a wit. Lover was that different thing—a humorist: a man, not only of fancy, but of fancy's motive power—emotion; and as the motive power in his case was by no means inconsiderable, his ideas had at least the merit of rarely wanting spontaneity. I wish I could recall some of his many ready pleasantries; the following are not among the best, but are simply such as recur to me.

A lady of great beauty and attraction, who was an ardent admirer of Ireland, crowned her praises of it at a party by saying, "I think I was meant for an Irishwoman." "Cross the Channel, madam," he replied, "and millions will say you were meant for an Irishman."

Another lady of musical talent singing to him on a day in summer one of her own compositions, he was so much struck with it that he exclaimed, "What earnestness!

what passion!" "Passion," she replied, as she rose gravely from her chair and pointed to the mantelpiece—"I have no more passion than that marble." Lover stared, and she continued—"And that's cold enough, I suppose." "Not always," he rejoined; "the fire has got to be lighted."

It was at the close of 1835 that Lover commenced his labours as a dramatist. He supplied his patroness, Madame Vestris, with a novelty for Christmas, under the title of *The Olympic Picnic*. *The Olympic Revels* and *The Olympic Devils*, from the pens of Messrs. Planché and Charles Dance, had inaugurated at her theatre that new school of burlesque which, in its greater taste and poetic feeling, had so much improved upon its class as introduced in the past century by Kane O'Hara and Thomas Carey; and Lover showed he was not unworthy of his clever predecessors by the grace and spirit of his production. It was another vehicle for the presentment of Olympian gods and goddesses, with airy jokes and telling parodies on the popular songs of the day; and, supported by the attraction of the manageress in the character of Pandora, it made the pleasantest impression, and ran throughout the season. But this was its writer's only venture in this style of entertainment, which, it is scarcely necessary to say, has degenerated since then into such a compound of vulgarity, cynical impertinence, and grossness, as to have become one of the most active underminers of dramatic taste.

Lover's next effort for the stage was a *petite* comedy, *The Beau Ideal*, in which that admirable comedian Liston—

who, though the plainest man in England, believed that when in evening dress he resembled George IV.—represented a man of fashion; and this was also well received. In the following year (1837) he adapted for the Adelphi theatre his novel of *Rory O'More*, with the view of enabling Tyrone Power to embody its buoyant hero; and the result was a success in which that greatest of Irish actors achieved one of his truest and most exhilarating triumphs. Many must remember how well he realized every trait of the original, and what hurricanes of laughter shook the walls of the little theatre at his narration of the wonders of “the fox of Bally Botherum”—a delightful piece of drollery expanded by the author from his tale of *Paddy the Sport*.

Soon after, Lover supplied two other successful vehicles for the talents of his new ally—the “Irish Guide,” in his drama of *The White Horse of the Peppers*, and also, at the Haymarket, the farce of *The Happy Man*, a most laughable extravagance, founded on the oriental comicality of a man without a shirt. The operetta of *The Greek Boy*, produced by Madame Vestris at Covent Garden, for which he composed both words and music, was another fortunate effort; and a companion to it in character, of which he was also the double parent—*Il Paddy Whack in Italia*—produced by Mr. Balfe at the Lyceum, met with similar success. Two other little ventures, which were very well received—*The Hall Porter* and *Macarthy More*—complete their writer's dramatic labours.

Of all these pieces the most enduring have been the three on Irish subjects. This was to be expected from Lover's command of native character and humour, and was also explained by the cleverness with which he had accomplished their adaptation; and the only wonder is, considering the material he must have had in his fancy, and which was also lying to his hand half prepared in his own stories, that his productions of this class should after all have been so few. *Handy Andy* and *The Fairy-Finder* are certainly capable of dramatic treatment; and the pathetic story of *Father Roach*, and, still more, of the unhappy *Blacksmith*, contain elements of interest which could not fail to awaken sympathy. Few however as they are, his Irish pieces have the merit of removing what till then was a great want upon our stage. They accomplish the same object for our drama that his stories do for our fiction, and his comic love-songs for our verse—they present the Irish peasant for the first time with a whole coat and clean face; they place him before the English public in all his vivacity and drollery, without a tinge of the low vulgarity which had so long been his disgrace.

At the same time, it is but right to own that much of their immediate popularity was owing to the peculiar merits of their principal illustrator. Nature had fashioned Tyrone Power to become Lover's best interpreter. He could feel and give expression to all the latter's best conceptions; he had all the gaiety, the elasticity, and the enjoyment of his inspirer, in union with a humour so rich

and plentiful, that it could do as much with a word or look as many of his successors have been able to accomplish in a scene. Nature had also been very favourable in his personal endowments; he had a round facetious face, a large, grey, expressive eye, a compact and supple figure, and a voice that was equally effective in its quality and strength.

He was also an excellent comic singer, and he danced Irish jigs with a lightness and a gusto that were wholly irresistible. He was, however, limited in his range. He could not play an Irish gentleman, though he laboured under the delusion that it was one of his happiest achievements. He had neither the dignity nor elegance that were essential to such a task. His Irish Ambassador—a Baronet—was the strangest mixture possible of stilted affectation and farcical extravagance; and his Sir Lucius O'Trigger, in *The Rivals*, was certainly the worst I have ever seen. The utmost he could rise to above the level of the peasant, was the free and easy adventurer, as in the hero of *His Last Legs*; or that intermediate being between squire and farmer—the “Squireen,”—as in the farce of *The Irish Attorney*, wherein his acting was inimitable.

Power, who had belonged to the commissariat at the close of the Peninsular War, was a man of taste and literary ability. He was the author of a couple of novels which made a good impression in their day, and of some travels in America which reviewed that country in a candid and very creditable spirit. He was also possessed of

a certain pleasantry which could at times become sarcastic. He was once acting in the same country theatre with Charles Kean, and on entering the green-room at night, he found the tragedian on a sofa greatly exhausted by his labours. "What's the matter, Kean?" he exclaimed—"you seem terribly knocked up." "Knocked up!" replied the latter, in a tone which was intended to convey a withering sense of contempt,—“I have been acting tragedy, you will remember, and that is rather more exhausting than Doctor O'Toole, or Teddy the Tiler.” “Yes,” replied Power, as he arranged his hair before the glass—“physically—physically!”

All this while Lover pursued unceasingly his labours as a painter. He evidently looked upon his easel as the mainstay of his income, and having at length got together a large and fashionable connection, not a day was allowed to pass without some efforts in its service. Among the host of miniatures he executed, I may refer to three or four that attracted much attention, and also to a few others which, though not generally known, are still interesting in their indication of his more characteristic tastes. His painting, referred to in “Blackwood” as the best small portrait at Somerset House, in 1835—that of the Ambassador of the King of Oude—approached the nearest of all his works to the merits of his Paganini picture. It was at that time the largest miniature that had ever been exhibited, and, apart from all claims of workmanship, had great advantages of subject.

It was a full-length likeness of the Moulvie Mahomet Ishmael Khan, attired in the apparel of his rank, and attesting it with a face that was nobly Oriental. His look was invested with all that calm and thoughtful dignity, that grand expression of repose, that in the Indian seems to brood over the memories of empire; and this composure was well supported by the regal richness of his vestments—the jewelled and brocaded beauty of his picturesque attire. In the treatment of all these particulars Lover was signally successful—the gorgeous yellow satin robes affording a special opportunity for his great excellence of colour. They were painted with a brilliancy that was almost blinding in its effect, and yet in union with a reality the most faithful and minute, and this success was the more notable considering the difficulty of treating yellow, with the tendency, as is well known, of its shadows to turn green.

Our artist's daughter retains a pleasant remembrance of this picture's stately original, who, it seems, much to his credit, combined the spirit of the student with the tasks of an ambassador. A profound Oriental scholar, he devoted his sittings to the duty of unfolding the mysteries of the English alphabet, an occupation that of course added to the earnestness of his expression, however little adapted to eliciting its grandeur. Occasionally his wife—a massive, imposing Begum, blessed with an abundance of cashmeres—would stride into the room to observe the progress of the picture, when the servant would persist in the Anglo-Saxon irreverence of calling her “Mrs. Moulvie!”

Another portrait of a public man, which was much noticed at the time, was that of Lord Brougham, in his robes of office as Lord Chancellor. Here, again, colour and texture were united to a remarkable resemblance. Even the Chancellor's nasal irritability, which had so much increased during the warfare he had conducted in the House of Lords, seemed to have been caught in this clever effort. "The face speaks!" exclaimed some one when it was hung at the Academy. "Speaks!" added David Roberts—"more than that, the nose moves!" A third picture which was much admired, was that of Thalberg the pianist, whose placid, amiable expression was very happily transcribed. Thalberg had a high opinion of the artist's merits, not only with the pencil, but as a composer, and warmly complimented him when they first met as "Ze auser of ze Angel's whistle!"

But in addition to these and other likenesses of people known and unknown, Lover painted several miniatures, as his daughter tells us, to please himself. They were for the most part "fancy pictures"—faces and subjects that gave some scope to his poetic and inventive power; and even portraits when he met with any one who had the essentials of ideal treatment. This was, of course, a great relief to much of his inevitable drudgery; to the insignificance of crowds of visages and the monotony of modern attire—the great drawbacks to his art, which every professor of it must feel who is unable to choose his sitters, but must make the most of those that come to him. He has, how-

ever, a heavier burden. He has not only to transcribe dulness—he is expected to flatter vanity. The plainest people, it is proverbial, always think themselves the handsomest; and this delusion, which is, of course, merciful in keeping them in temper with the world, the poor artist is required not only to tolerate, but to sustain. The portrait painter is unquestionably one of the martyrs of society.

Lover's likenesses of children were particularly good. He was always very fond of them; and they, by a sort of instinct, were attracted towards him. He had a deep sympathy with their innocent happiness, and an observant eye to their playful ways, and was also very successful with their warm healthful tints of flesh colour. His infants, be it remarked, were none of the angelic monsters that were so common in those days, with their waxy skins, their flaming tresses, and their eyes the size of a giraffe's—things that stared at you till, in sheer astonishment, you were compelled to stare in return. He felt that nothing was more beautiful than nature in a child, and that the Hand only could improve which had been benignly pleased to form it.

One of his sweetest portraits that I remember was that of Russell Moore, the youngest son of the poet, and a great resemblance to his father, whose bright expression dawning in the child, Lover caught with great felicity. Of his fanciful class of pictures, one of the earliest that he exhibited in London was called, "Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture"—a group of three little darlings, one of whom

was trying to draw, another was showing a figure it had cut from a piece of paper, whilst the third was seriously engaged in building a house of cards upon the floor. The triumphant expression of the little sculptor, and the deep absorption of the architect, just provoked that sense of the ludicrous which was one of the best proofs of their truth.

Another engaging child-subject was his "Connemara Kelp-gatherer," exhibited in 1838, in which the gentle, trustful countenance of the industrious little labourer was drawn in the happiest accordance with her simple Celtic grace of attire. "The Rebellious Ward" was another specimen, quite as lifelike if not as pleasing—a haughty, self-willed type of childhood; but in which the painter, after all, could not help making the lovable almost as obvious as the perverse. I think it was at the same exhibition hung his portrait of "An Egyptian" connected with one of the London embassies, shown reclining on a divan and enjoying his chibouque. This was another of his successes, both in respect to colour and texture.

Great, however, as was his enjoyment when he could pursue his art in these directions, it was necessarily limited. He was not rich, and his ordinary commissions were too productive to be put aside. These he continued to fulfil with unrelaxing application till his labours ran into excess and provoked a serious penalty. His eyesight, never strong, and sufficiently tried at his easel, was further taxed by the exercise of his capacity for etching, which

called forth by his first stories, and afterwards employed for other authors, was at length resorted to as a means of heightening the attractions of his novels. This was a hazardous expedient. The two years' labour that he gave to the illustrating as well as writing of *Handy Andy* and its fellow serial, weakened his sight so severely as to put a stop to all his painting. His leading talent had to be abandoned, and with it the chief source of his income. This was one of the heaviest blows of his life; and yet, disastrous as it was, there was a still harder one to follow. Rest and quiet would have sufficed to repair his injured vision; but photography arose, and miniature painting as a profession was extinguished altogether.

It was under this twin stroke of adversity that Lover closed his career as an artist. It is true he endeavoured to renew it, when his sight was re-established, by attempting another field of painting, and by means of another vehicle—oil colour; but the attempt, as will be seen, was not destined to be successful. It is with miniature he is identified; it was miniature that became his passion, that won him his early fame in Ireland, and was his mainstay whilst displaying his other capacities elsewhere. His pain, therefore, in resigning it may be easily conceived. It was the surrender of what had proved to him his greatest impulse and enjoyment. Nevertheless, it may be asked, had such a loss no compensation? Was not his pain, for instance, repaid by the reputation he had acquired? The answer to such a question must certainly seem extra-

ordinary—that, despite the excellence he has reached, and the amount of work he has produced, his name, up to this moment, has remained least known as a painter.

I have already said of him, that his highest talent was the one that brought him the least honour, though I have endeavoured to explain the cause by his greater popularity as a song-writer and a composer. There is, however, another reason to be given. A painter's fame, in a great measure, must depend on his publicity. The artistic world, as a rule, must have the freest access to his works, both to obtain a sense of his merits and to keep them in remembrance. Now, it is the peculiar case of Miniature that its possession tends to privacy. In its more intimate association with home affections and family reverence, it acquires a degree of sacredness which is not shared by the oil portrait. It becomes a treasured personal record, reserved for the select gaze of a few, and not a work of art that ought to be offered to the eyes of multitudes. Consequently its painters must have often had to suffer from a restriction which probably has denied them many of their most adequate admirers; and, of course, the evil was increased when their art had passed away. Then all interest was at an end in its soft and elegant distinctions, and its best specimens, when superseded, necessarily soon became forgotten.

These considerations may serve to show why Lover's talents as a painter are, of all his merits, the least known. His art has not only vanished, but his productions are out

of view. With one grand exception only, they are hidden away in homes which even his friends are not aware of, and are only to be seen by means of an influence which the general public cannot command. And a state of things so injurious to the artist of course embarrasses the critic. In the absence of accessible evidence he can as little enforce the claims of his subject as he can escape, perhaps, at times, the suspicion of urging them unduly. His predicament is also greater in the peculiar case of an art wherein the eye detects so much that is not to be transmitted by the pen—shades and delicacies of feeling of which it is easy to feel the beauty, but very difficult indeed to convey a clear idea.

Among the literary events which marked this interval with Lover was the aid he gave in launching two important periodicals. With Charles Dickens, Father Prout, Ingoldsby Barham, and Harrison Ainsworth, he was associated in the outset of the once popular "Bentley's Miscellany," to which he contributed, in detached sketches, the early chapters of *Handy Andy*; and with Charles Lever, Dr. Petrie, William Carleton, and other worthies, he assisted in the start of the "Dublin University Magazine," one of the most brilliant of all the monthlies that have distinguished the press of Ireland. It was in the opening numbers of the latter appeared his capital story of *Barney O'Reirdon*. He also received a flattering testimony to the position he had acquired—personal, literary, and artistic—in the dinner that was given him at "Grillon's," by forty

members of the House of Commons : a group of eminent Irishmen who were delighted to acknowledge publicly how much credit his career had reflected on his country.

This was, indeed, a period in which life flowed on sparkingly with Lover. The affection of his sight was the first misfortune he had known for years. All his efforts had been prosperous; his health remained unbroken; his home was still a happy one; and society, to which he turned with as much appetite as ever, still welcomed and applauded him as one of its great favourites. His income, also, enabled him not only to live in comfort, but frequently to dispense a simple cheerful hospitality. In London, as in Dublin, he had his evenings to receive his friends, in which he often contrived to assemble a tolerable amount of mirth and cleverness. All who, still surviving, can look back to those merry gatherings under his roof, need not be told of their often brilliant, and always hearty animation. How many faces will return to remind them of some engaging or diverting characteristic.

Mrs. Jameson, with her genial countenance, equally thoughtful and benignant, as ready to enjoy as to discuss any point in art or poetry; Miss Landon, with her enchanting playfulness, masking the melancholy at her heart, which found—need it be added?—so much expression in her writing; Miss Pardoe, with her graceful fancy; and Lady Stepney, with her travelled memory;—and, in coming to the coarser sex, Tom Campbell, with his quiet utterance of some marvellous absurdity; Charles Young,

with his grave burlesque, revenging himself in private for having so long been condemned to tragedy ; David Roberts, with his heightening touch ready to assist a fresh explosion ; James Kenny, with his immense vitality shut up in a withered frame, constantly tugging at his shirt collar, and as often hitching up a joke with it ; Dr. Croly, lofty and solemn, stalking in to discuss literature, but always falling back to gurggle his laughter in a corner ; Francis Mahoney, pleasantest of puzzles—priest, *bon-vivant*, and philomath—able to discourse in thirteen languages, and using English only to mystify you ; John Poole, silent as a door-post till the merriment was dropping, and then giving it a whirl that sent it flying round the room again ; Richard Barham, with his oddities constantly bubbling to his lips, and a face that, as Jerrold said, seemed to “per-spire comicality.”

And last, not least, Jerrold himself—no humorist like the rest,—no jester who reached the risible through sympathy and feeling,—but a pure, uncompounded wit, who dealt only with ideas, and who could lavish, whenever in spirits, more good things in a single evening than most of his contemporaries wrote or uttered in a twelvemonth. That little, stooping, round-backed, eager-looking man, with his large grey eyes and his hooked nose, something vulturine in aspect, and yet whose swoopings, after all, were mostly on roguery and humbug,—how few have met him that did not feel—could he have respected his brilliant powers half as much as he loved society—he would have

left behind him something higher in the way of social satire than anything that has enriched our literature since the days of Swift and Fielding! The force and affluence of his genius no one can conceive who has not read him. The hastiest farces that he threw off in his early days for the minor theatres, even the Entertainment for Vauxhall which he concocted for Tom Cooke, have enough wit and imagination to float a dozen modern comedies.

Of the multitude of his brilliancies most, of course, have perished with their hearers; but, fortunately, many survive, of which I will venture to repeat a few, merely as specimens of his daily utterances, and as things that I know must retain their relish even for those who knew him best. Such are his comment on Albert Smith, when the latter's literary signature was pointed out to him—A. S.—“Ah, that's a fellow who never tells more than two-thirds of the truth!” And on his encountering a man at his club who had just read some stupid poem, and his dragging him up to its author with the exclamation, “Mr. So-and-so, allow me the pleasure of introducing you to—your public!” His comment on George Robins, —when somebody said that, now he was dead, his business would go to the devil,—“Nothing lost, then,” he exclaimed, “he'll get it again. And, better still, his instantaneous reply to a dull adversary, who, stung by him into momentary vigour, burst into something that raised a laugh—“Oh, I see, you are true lead; cut you deep enough, and you shine!”

CHAPTER XI.

1836—1846.—Lover's Merits as a Composer—A Writer of Melodies—Their Importance—The Testimony of Haydn and Rossini—The National Melodies of Europe—The Celtic and the Gothic—The Mournfulness of those of Ireland attributable to its History—Lover commences as an Adapter—His Original Compositions—Their Variety: *Under the Rose, The Land of Dreams*, etc.—Their Simplicity of Structure—His Words and Music simultaneous—Co-exertion of Three Talents—The True Nature of the Song-Writer—The Descendant of the Bards, who combined Verse and Music—Modern Songs ordinarily Poems—The Real Song-Writers of Modern Times—Béranger, Burns, Dibdin, Moore, and Lover—Three of these Composers—All Adapters of Native Airs—Lady Morgan the Earliest Adapter of the Irish—The Mechanism of Song-Writing—Lover's Comments on the Subject—The Greatest Poets not always the Best Song-Writers—Moore and Burns the Great Exemplars—Perfection of Moore's Words—Burns' Musical Sympathy—Béranger as a Song Adapter—Lover's New Venture with the Public—An Irish Entertainment—His Precedents—Samuel Foote and his "Tea-Parties"—Charles Dibdin with his Songs and Stories—George Stevens's Lecture on Heads—The Elder Mathews and his "At Homes"—Intended *Début* of Thomas Moore—Lover's *Début* and his Success—The Elegance of his Entertainments—Profitable Tour, and Invigorated Health—Resolve to Visit America, the *El Dorado* of the Artist—The Tide of Emigration—Characteristic Stories of the Time.

ALL this while there was a talent which Lover was exerting with great success, side by side with his capacity for fiction and for painting—it was that of a composer. Of course he made no pretension to it in any grand sense of

the term. He was no educated musician—no master of the art of harmony, who could combine voice and instrument in the elaborate illustration of imaginative themes. He wrote no great musical work—no opera nor oratorio, nor even a cantata or a symphony. He was a composer simply of song-music—in other words, of melodies—and a musician only to the extent of being able to provide them with agreeable accompaniments. But then it must be remembered that, humble as seems his faculty, it is in fact one of the highest, since in melody, after all, exists the vital element of all music whatsoever. Its simple sequence of sounds—as much a gift and a product of genius as harmony is an art, and usually the result of cultivation—seems to exert a mysterious influence over the sympathies and feelings, which renders its presence indispensable to all musical enjoyment.

Take operas, for instance. Out of some five thousand that have been written since the beginning of the past century, not more than a hundred have survived, and if these were examined it would be found that they owed their preservation chiefly to their melodies and their dramatic interest. Science and imagination may have done much to enlarge and enrich their composition, but it is in these two special constituents—the power of exciting the feelings, and the power of unfolding character—lies the secret of their existence. The greatest masters of the lyric drama—Glück, Mozart, Weber, Meyerbeer, Rossini, Bellini, Donizetti, Verdi, and Auber—affluent as

they are in the highest qualities, are still most notable for these.

The fact is almost as conspicuous in instrumental music. Even in the peculiar field of harmony, melody asserts its co-necessity. Beethoven, Haydn, and Mendelssohn maintain their great supremacy quite as much in this delightful attribute as in that grand command of combinations by which it is enveloped and conveyed. Haydn—its richest possessor, perhaps—places this endowment in the front rank. "Let your air be good," said he, "and whatever your composition, it will have beauty and be sure to please." And Rossini, as is well known, has left his fortune, on the death of his widow, to found a school of music in his native town, wherein the holders of the scholarships are to be selected as they excel in melody. Lover had scarcely, therefore, any need to be ashamed of his position if he partook, however humbly, of a gift which has such a history.

Lover's published compositions number as many as two hundred. His lyrics, it may be remembered, amount to two hundred and sixty-three, all of which were set to music, as he tells us in his Preface; but an inspection of them will show that some forty or fifty, at least, have been set to native airs. This is not surprising when we consider that, like Moore and Lady Morgan, he had been familiar with such from childhood. His mother had sung him to sleep with them, and he had grown up in their companionship. There was also something in their history which

endeared them to an Irishman. The national melodies of Europe, as I have said in a former chapter, sprung from her bards or troubadours, and are strikingly expressive of the races they belong to. Whilst those of the Celt are highly passionate, and have all the force of his known extremes—the most wildly inspiring and jubilant, or the most intensely tender and pathetic—those of the Goth, on the contrary, are more equable and fanciful, and are rather distinguished by a hearty joviality and sprightliness.

The national airs of Ireland, whilst losing nothing of their Celtic fervour, largely mingle with it a peculiar mournfulness, which seems to have been gathered from her history. The voice of a people subdued and suffering, it mostly speaks in a minor key. Mr. Walker, in his learned Enquiry, has shown how this originated in the persecution of the bards;* and Lady Morgan justly echoes him when, in her *Patriotic Sketches*, she speaks of Irish emotion finding vent only in the broken and suppressed utterances of minor thirds. How signally is this illustrated in the pensive beauty of those melodies that Bunting was the first to collect, and that Moore gave to celebrity by marrying “to immortal verse.” What an increased charm they derive from the tender shadow that lies over them—the tremulous sigh they seem to yield, amidst the gayest of their breathings, at the still cherished, if departed, joys and glories of their land!

But even Ireland's comic minstrelsy seems to owe

* “History of the Irish Bards,” p. 207.

something to her history. In its fitful eccentricity and exuberant enjoyment, the national humour appears to be indulging in a vigorous rebound—to be exhibiting the delightful freedom of something that has suddenly escaped from bondage. A large proportion of its airs are dance tunes—true old Milesian “lilts,” which, after whirling the limbs about for ages, began to exercise the tongue; and among them, not the least hilarious, are many that entered the Saxon service—many that were adopted by the Protestants at the beginning of the past century, in their bacchanalian and other ditties, as a means of letting off the effervescence which they had caught from the livelier natives. Such, for instance, is *The Rakes of Mallore*, one of the especial songs of Buckism, in which the English words so well respond to the frolic Celticism of the tune. Surrounded by such music, the Irish lyrist and composer could hardly fail to commence his pleasant toils as an adapter. His tendency would be rather to give speech to the airs he loved, to make articulate their manifold and deeply-felt suggestions, than to write songs which would require to be united to new melodies.

It was as time went on that Lover developed his own musical conceptions, and showed they could extend to above two hundred compositions. Their character may be surmised. They are not in the least degree convivial. He has not enlivened this ample list with a single bacchanalian. And they are as slightly patriotic. Of that class he has given but one instance—the air of his Jacobite, *Fagh*

na Bealach; and that is one of Carolan's—known as the “Fly not yet” of Moore. Again, they contain no passionate love-tunes—save in a couple of specimens at most their quality is simply that of a fervid sensibility. Their range is from humour to pathos, from a hearty flow of mirthfulness up to the most elegant vivacity, and the most tender display of feeling.

They have their playful and coquettish gracefulness, as in the delightful *Under the Rose*—they have their pathos and passionate ardour, as in that most affecting *What will you do, Love?*—and they have their delicate poetic beauty, as in that exquisite murmur of an ideal rapture which forms one of Lover's clearest titles to the gift of genius, *The Land of Dreams*. There are other airs of his that attained to greater popularity, such as *The Four-leaved Shamrock*, *The Fairy Boy*, *The May-dew*, etc.; but I fancy it would be difficult to place them on the same level of merit. All these melodies are distinguished by the truest qualities of structure—compactness, symmetry, simplicity, and the directest sequence or self-evolvment. Their effect is not produced by any artifices of transition, modulation, or embellishment; but by the fulness of the thought or feeling which serves to simplify their form as much as it gives intensity and depth to their expression. They have exactly that expansion which is the truest character of vocal music; they become the complement of their words by the directest unfolding of their emotion.

Nor is there any mystery in the matter, since, in

Lover's case, it seems the words and music were born together. He told his daughter, on one occasion, that he never wrote a song in his life except he "couldn't help it;" and he never attempted to pen the words but the air came simultaneously. He would at times display the marvel of exerting three talents at once. In the midst of his painting he would feel the stirring of some new lyrical conception. He would try to keep it down, out of justice to his sitter; but as it developed and approached its birth, further suppression would become impossible; he would apologize for a brief absence, and, retiring to the next room, would jot down in hasty scratches the thoughts and music that had occurred to him, and then, returning to his easel, leave the completion of what he had just initiated to another opportunity. It is only necessary to add that the accompaniments to his songs were invariably agreeable, and always marked by the merit of giving full support to the voice.

These particulars respecting Lover suggest, among some other things, the true nature of the song-writer. He begins with laying claim to a very respectable antiquity. He is the rightful descendant of the bard—Celtic, Greek, or Scandinavian—who, by means of song, brought into existence both poetry and music. Verse, the first speech of emotion, as soon as it was called on to address a multitude, reached a point where it failed to give sufficient force to feeling, and required music to expand it into an adequate impressiveness; and thus the bard was always

the musician, who composed the song he sung, and who also had to accompany it on some primitive stringed instrument. His was the fourfold avocation of poet, composer, singer, and player.

As time elapsed, verse and music arose into distinct arts, and with varying excellence established their schools, their models, and their triumphs; but with the irruption of the Goths, mind went back to rude emotion, and again required its old minstrel, and its double expression of song and tune. The troubadour, the minne-singer, the Spanish and Italian song-writers, prolonged the ancient precedent of poet and composer until their functions were again separated, leaving as relics of their second union the romantic ballads of Europe, which were written to be sung in recitative, and also its national melodies, the words of which had mostly perished. The lapse of a thousand years seems to have revived the bardic necessity. The material progress of modern society has tended to give supremacy to ideas over feelings, and their adjustment being necessary, poetry was called in to effect it; but failing in the attempt, she again summoned music to supplement her efforts and expand the influence of emotion into a due share of human impulse.

Thus the lyric drama arises to extend the uses of the poetic, and the song-writer comes back to us to renew, in a refined age, the service he yielded in a rude one. He is still the poet, who proposes to enlarge emotion by the aid of melody. He may compose his airs himself,

or he may borrow those of others, but music is at all times his indispensable auxiliary. He has always, therefore, a distinction by which he may be detected. The battle-strains of Arndt and Körner—the passionate and mocking songs of Heine—the amatory and social verse of the French, from J. B. Rousseau and Dorat, down to Lebrun and Victor Hugo—and, coming to our own land (since Spain and Italy have contributed so little of the kind), all the quaint and fanciful lyrics from the time of Herrick to that of Waller (Campbell, and others of his class, having written ballads and not songs), are short and completed poems, containing all the emotion they require, and in which we feel that the wit and fancy are, after all, the chief ingredients. Who, then, are the true song-writers, who take their stand in modern times as the rightful successors of those bards with whom their faculty originated? If it be a Béranger in one land, a Robert Burns in another, perhaps a Dibdin in a third—after a Thomas Moore in a fourth, beyond all question stands a Lover.

Three of these writers were composers; all were adapters of words to music, and all confessed by such a service the inspiration they derived from it. Their national melodies floated round them like sylphs—invisible spirits whom, the closer they communed with, the more faithfully their poetry embodied in enduring forms. Béranger—gayest, happiest, most exuberant of songsters, however his mood could deepen into earnestness and dignity—drew an impulse from the old vaudevilles in

their sparkling and piquant vivacity, and their manly, cheerful fervour (more Frankish, I imagine, than Celtic) which largely explains the convivial ardour of his *Roger Bontemps* and his *Roi d'Yvetot*, the kindling invocation to his ancestral Gauls and Franks, and the affecting tribute to imperial greatness in his *Souvenirs du Peuple*.

Not less sensibly was Robert Burns stirred by the national airs of Scotland, whether playful or pathetic, simply passionate or fondly loyal, when, capable as he was of penning verse without a note of melody to float it, he could consent to clothe with poetry two hundred and fifty native tunes. Still more confirmatory is the case of Moore. He had a capacity for more than lyricism—he could rise to the composition of extended and enduring poems; and yet, though so endowed, he frankly tells us that it was music which first attracted him to poetry, and the hope that he might render to the wild airs of his country the same service that had been yielded to those of Scotland by Robert Burns.* Upon the productions of Charles Dibdin—simplest and heartiest of sea songsters—which must always retain at least an historical value in English annals, I can have no occasion to dwell; and yet as little should I pass over, in the records of a sister country, the claims of Lady Morgan, the earliest adapter of Irish melodies, of whose setting of some dozen airs one evidence survives at least, in the graceful archness of the words which have preserved for us *Kate Kearney*.

* Preface to the fifth volume of his collected works.

But all these writers had another merit. They were great proficient in an art, if of little honour, of some importance—that of the mechanism of song-writing. They not only had the power to detect the true feeling of an air, but to select the especial words that would render its expression most complete. In the highly interesting Preface to the fifth edition of his *Lyrics*, Lover points out with great distinctness the leading laws of such an art. A song requires to have as many open vowel sounds as possible, and as few sibilant or guttural—the great drawback of our language. It must have condensation, elasticity, firmness, and variety of rhythm, correct accentuation in order to ensure its flow and harmony, and, as a rule, it must select a good singing, rather than reading or poetic, phrasology. In fact, he candidly avows that a rightly constructed song must lose so much vigour of expression as necessarily to limit its poetical enjoyment.

It is not the best poets, he avers, who have been always the best song-writers. Many of the most charming lyrics that can be quoted of Milton, Byron, and Shelley, however admirable in reading, were never intended to be sung. At the same time he refers to two exemplars of the art, who conquered all its difficulties in union with great poetic power—Burns and Thomas Moore. He says very justly, on instancing the simple lines—

“Ye banks and braes of bonny Doon,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?”

that they open the singer's mouth quite as agreeably as.

Italian; and he cites as a fellow example of felicitous selection, the *Minstrel Boy* of Moore, extending the praise, however, very properly to all the latter's songs—the wonderful exactness of their language, in giving the closest expression of a thought, being only paralleled by the free play which such exactness gives the music.

Moore himself, in the Preface I have referred to, joins in the eulogy of Burns, and, among other of his qualifications for the task of an adapter, points to his keen musical sympathy, his power of detecting the character of an air, whenever disguised by and perverted to the use of inappropriate words,—as in the case of the old ludicrous song of *Fee him, Father, fee him*, the melody of which he has connected with one of his most pathetic compositions, *Thou hast left me ever*; and, again, the semi-convivial Jacobite chorus of *Hey Tuttie Tattie*, which he has elevated to its proper dignity in the heroic strain of *Scots wha ha'*. Of Béranger I need not say that he largely partakes of these distinctions, his free command of rhythm and charming terseness of expression having long since been appreciated by all who have enjoyed his verses. And as little can it be necessary that I should point to the workmanship of Lover, who, faithfully exemplifying all the rules he has laid down, has mastered—second to Moore only—the mechanism of song-writing.

We have now come to a period of some interest in his history. His pencil, as I have intimated, had supplied a large part of his income; and when it was suddenly

arrested by the weakening of his sight, and without the offset of any increase of his resources in other quarters, the result, as may be supposed, became seriously embarrassing. The misfortune was all the greater that the blow had fallen when he was no longer young, and when a good amount of his activity had been consumed by incessant labour. Still he was not the man to be easily beaten. It was necessary he should hit upon some new path of exertion, and though he appeared to have exhausted every talent he possessed, there was fortunately a last one which he could still turn to account. After a little consideration he resolved to venture on the experiment of an Irish Entertainment.

There was a great deal that was feasible in this spirited idea. It was simply to amuse the public with what had so long regaled his friends—to turn into a performance what he had been all his life rehearsing. The only difference in this delivery of his songs and recitations was the exchanging the drawing-room for the concert-room, and charging his audience for admission. He had also plenty of precedents. English and Scotch Entertainments had been given in abundance before his time, and authors and composers had set him the example of illustrating in public their verbal and vocal compositions. Samuel Foote, with whom this class of amusement may be said to have originated, set out with inviting the world to “Tea” at “the little theatre in the Haymarket;” which tea, whilst they were sipping, he flavoured with personal

sketches, wonderfully laughable, no doubt, but, as it appears, somewhat impertinent.

Charles Dibdin, not long afterwards, sang and recited his "Songs and Stories" at a table and a piano surmounted with a pair of candles, when his fine old flowing melodies, with that undulating swell in them so suggestive of the sea, and his hearty traits of humanity quite as distinctive of the land, enabled crowds of our worthy ancestors to pass a very cheerful evening. George Alexander Stevens was also highly successful with his "Lecture upon Heads," which he illustrated in a manner proper to a period of perukes, having a group of blocks placed on a stand, to which he gave life and individuality by fitting them up with appropriate wigs, as he described existing characters. To all these public humorists a sort of personal interest attached. They were both author and illustrator, and the double talent they combined gave a greater zest to the night's enjoyment.

Another class of this amusement is that later and more diverting one, in which an actor who was gifted with great mimetic and vocal power has stood at a table, and, with the aid of partial or entire change of dress, assumed a variety of characters. This was a diversion that became popular with John Bannister and Lee Lewes, towards the close of the past century, and which, in our own, was brought to its perfection by the genius of the elder Mathews, in his inimitable "At Homes," given at the old Adelphi theatre. These were prepared for him by

men who had a special talent for this kind of writing—J. H. Reynolds and Richard Peake—but their cleverness would have gone for nothing had it not been illustrated by a comedian who, whether in respect to his dramatic gifts or his universality of humour, was never rivalled by any candidate that has thus stood before the public. Lover, however, had a greater authority than the best of these examples. It was none other than that of Thomas Moore, who in 1813, when at the height of his fame as a poet, contemplated the career of an executant by giving lectures on poetry and music which, it seems probable, he would have illustrated with his own voice at the piano.* Had he carried out his aim, it is easy to conceive the sensation he would have created and the success he must have achieved.

Without aspiring to emulate any of the instances I have mentioned, Lover was justified in thinking that the public might be interested in meeting personally with a man who had so much contributed to their amusement, and seeing whether the illustrator stood on a level with the author. He accordingly prepared an olio of his most popular productions, both literary and musical; but, on delivering it in private, discovered that his voice would not be strong enough to sustain the entire burden of the task. He was therefore compelled to secure the aid of two young ladies for its vocal portion, whilst he confined himself for the most part to the gayer duty of recitation.

* Russell's "*Life of Moore*," vol. i. p. 331.

Thus enforced, he made his *début* at the concert-room of the Princess theatre in March, 1844, and achieved a complete success. *Rory O'More* and *The Angel's Whisper* were vehemently encored, and *Barney O'Reirdon* and *The Gridiron*—in which his assumption of the peasant character was something worthy of Power himself—as heartily laughed at and applauded.

And the next morning the night's impression was very serviceably confirmed by the highly favourable comments which appeared in all the papers. This success, however, was to be attributed to more sources than one. Independently of the merits of the performance, and the personal interest that attached to it, a certain elegance distinguished it from the usual "table entertainments." The stage was fitted up like a drawing-room, for the reception of an evening party, with its chandeliers, fancy tables, sofas, piano, etc., and Lover and his fair companions seemed to be addressing, throughout their labours, rather a group of friends under his own roof than the money-paying public. This excellent idea, which was so natural in his circumstances, and which has so often been repeated with unimpaired effect, originated, as far as my memory extends, with himself, and, of course, was a further and not a trivial attraction to just that portion of society which could appreciate him most.

This performance, I believe, was continued to the close of the London season (a proof that its financial was not the least part of its success), when Lover proceeded into

the country, and at all its principal cities met with quite as warm a reception as he had enjoyed in the metropolis. It must be needless for me to say how gratifying was the welcome that awaited him in Ireland. During the ten years of his absence, he had done much to please a people who are so sensitive as the Irish to all that supports the national credit—he had had his threefold successes, literary, pictorial, and musical, and, amidst all the celebrities of the great British capital, had managed to maintain a very reputable standing. His reception therefore was very hearty, and the applause elicited by his efforts set a seal on the truth and humour of those traits of native character, which had pleased so much in England. This tour extended to two years, and proved to be very profitable. It was also marked by the advantage that it was highly serviceable to his health. Under its various good influences of change of scene, pleasant excitement, and continued success, not only his sight had much improved, but his voice had strengthened so greatly that he was able to dispense with his lady associates, and give his Entertainment alone.

It was at this point that a further project of considerable importance occurred to him. America had long become the *El Dorado* of many artists—the rich and pleasure-loving country, which had liberally rewarded every one who had succeeded in enlivening it, and which therefore held out a promise of more than ordinary good results to a man who could appeal to its favour on so many grounds as Lover. His songs, stories, and dramas had

all been favourites in the West, and, in addition to the native, there was now in its principal cities a large Irish population, which would be sure to make him welcome. To the West, therefore, he determined to shape his course at once ; and having made all his arrangements, he set sail for it in the autumn of 1846.

At the time of his departure emigration had become in Ireland the great topic of the day. Years before, its momentous tide had commenced its slowly widening course, but under the terrible calamity which was now ravaging the country—her memorable famine—it had swollen into a flood. America was the land of refuge that every one was going to or talking of, and to the minds of the peasantry it was not only a grand asylum, but a wonder. It had assumed the same mysterious aspect that it had to the English in the time of Elizabeth, and if not exactly a region where the gold was lying on the beach only waiting to be picked up, and the ready-roasted and erratic pigs were only too anxious to be eaten, it became a canvas on which the Irish fancy could paint sufficiently bewildering pictures. Several illustrative stories were told of the people at the time, some of which may bear repeating.

One of the peasantry, for instance, having heard that President Polk (or, as he pronounced it, Poke—an evidence of the stimulative vigour of his government) received every one at his residence, and in virtue of his station as the chief republican of his country, took the warmest

possible interest in everybody's business, desired a friend who was going out to call on "Mr. Poke," and ask him "whether he had heard of the Widow Doolan lately; and how the Hoolagans, the Rooneys, and the Blakes were getting on." Another, who had been told that the buffaloes at certain seasons travelled hundreds of miles to the "salt-licks," was under the impression that American beef was so generous as to undergo a self-curing operation, and was killed ready-salted; whilst a third, who had heard of the iron conductors attached to houses, to draw off the lightning in a thunderstorm, resolved, if he was ever caught in one, to stick a piece of iron in his hat, and then, as he remarked, "Sure I'd be aisy about the lightning."

The commissions which emigrants were favoured with were also very often more characteristic than practicable. A small farmer had lent a friend a pound to eke out his passage-money to "the States," on condition that the loan should be returned as soon as the borrower had landed; but a year having elapsed and no repayment having been made, a second friend who was going out received instructions to find the delinquent and demand the money peremptorily. "But what," observed the latter, who had some misgivings on the point—"what if the man refuse it?" "Refuse, is it?" shouted the despoiled one, as his stick rose in the air—"refuse, is it, you say? Why, then, bate the villain, sir; bate him within an inch of his dirty life, and if he begs you to have mercy, say—you must write home for instructions!"

CHAPTER XII.

1846, 1847.—*Visit to America*—Its Threefold Object—Songs, Sketches, and a Book—Arrival in New York—Washington Irving, N. P. Willis, Bryant the Poet, &c.—Climate of America—The Great Heat—Transitions—Dryness cause of Premature Decay—Obstacle to Drawing—The Highlands of the Hudson—New York—The “Empire City”—Its French Aspect—Boulevards—Awnings—Post Advertisements—Its Pavements—Its Mosquitoes the *Douaniers* of the Western Coast—Boston and its English Aspect—Its Anglo-Saxon Faces sharpened by a Rigorous Climate—The Athens of the Union—Emerson, Longfellow, &c.—The Poet’s House—Washington’s Head-quarters—Visit to Plymouth Rock—National Glory and Local Enterprise—Lover’s *Début* at Boston—Its Cold Audience—His Surprise—English Reserve Intensified by Climate—The New Englander of the Streets an Englishman Indoors—New England Humour an offset to its Temperament—Its Characteristics—First Importers: Matthews, Hackett, and Sam Slick—Old as the Pedlar of the Colonies—A Universal Genius—His Sharp Practice and Inventions: Horn Gun-flints and Wooden Nutmegs—His Munchausenisms—“Force of Imagination”—The Indian Summer—Lover’s Lyric—New Haven and the “Judge’s Cave”—Tradition of the Three Regicides—Death of Mrs. Lover—Departure for the South—Philadelphia the Quaker City—Baltimore the State of Merryland—Washington an Architectural Anti-Climax—Its Capitol—Its Poetic Aspect—Winter in America—Its Severity and its Offsets—Skating—Recollections of the Hudson—Its Sleighing and its various uses—Lover’s View of it Matrimonially—His Song *Slaying the Deer*.

LOVER was entering his fiftieth year when he set sail for America. Well aware of the trying nature of its climate on Europeans, he did not propose a prolonged visit, what-

ever its success; but so little on the whole was he affected by the experiment, that his stay extended to two years, and carried him in all directions from New Orleans to Quebec, and from the eastern seaboard to the Lakes. It is satisfactory also to know that his mind throughout this period was as active as his body. If necessity had compelled him to assume the duties of an executant, Nature had qualified him to become a writer, a composer, and an artist, and all this diversity was furnished with tolerable scope in the New World. He designed, therefore, to unite with the delivery of his Entertainment some other labours during his tour, which would give it more dignity as well as profit. He proposed to collect materials for a book on American society; to make sketches of the superb lake and river scenery of the West; and even to write and compose songs on any occasion of local interest.

Two of these aims he carried out. He made sketches of land and water, which became the foundation of later paintings; he also composed several songs under transatlantic inspirations, which on both sides of the ocean made a favourable impression; but, for reasons given hereafter, he relinquished his project of a book. The utmost he did towards it was to keep a diary of his travels—a continuation of some business memoranda of previous years, which, as a rough record of names, and dates, and the various localities he visited, would be sufficient to refresh his memory when he should sit down to composition. From this source I have extracted whatever was

most notable or agreeable in his impressions, transferring to a later page all those papers on Western subjects which he amused himself with penning.

After a painful parting with his amiable wife, who had been long an invalid, but who, in the interests of her children, wholly acquiesced in his expedition—and a tender leavetaking of his girls, he left London for Liverpool, was favoured with a pleasant passage, and reached New York, by way of Boston, on September the 6th. Here his letters of introduction soon surrounded him with friends—Washington Irving, N. P. Willis, Bryant the poet, and many others; and he had also the satisfaction of shaking hands with Robert Emmett, the esteemed nephew of the unhappy patriot—a meeting to which no Irishman was likely to be insensible. Having paid some visits in the neighbourhood, and enjoyed many hospitalities—on the 28th he made his bow to the American public as an executant, and was very flatteringly received by a crowded and elegant assembly.

Climate, of course, is the traveller's first impression in a new country, and just then, throughout the States, the heat was considerably greater than had been known for twenty years—the thermometer actually standing at 97° in the shade. Such an atmosphere necessarily furnishes some small excuse for those seductive drinks for which America is so proverbial—that large family of mixtures, from mint slings and sherry cobblers up to "Tallybogus," and other mysteries, which are poured down daily by arid thousands as though to extinguish a central fire. Lover speedily

experienced other features of the climate—its sudden and severe transitions (ranging in a night twenty degrees), and its objectionable dryness, which he considers the cause of the early withering of American beauty and manly vigour. “It seems,” he says, “to shrivel up the people into a premature old age.” He had never, in any country, seen hair that thinned so quickly and wrinkles that came so soon.

For the “crows-feet” which were to be detected about youthful eyes so frequently, he assigns another reason: “The sunshine is so unmitigated even in mid-winter, that the light becomes quite painful, and compels a closing or puckering of the lids, which leaves those traces in the corners that, in other lands, arise from time.” To us in England, who for months together live under a canopy of lead, this excess of light is an annoyance that is somewhat difficult to realize. With the former of these evils he was further impressed when he commenced sketching. Landscape drawing—the earliest form in which he had exercised his pencil, and to which, now miniature was done with, he returned with so much pleasure—he found, had to be practised under a totally different condition. “The great dryness and clearness of the atmosphere renders distant objects so visible, that the aerial perspective, which is always the source of so much charm in nature, is scarcely ever seen here. A stranger is constantly deceived upon all matters of remoteness. It was some time before I was enabled to measure distance by the eye.”

Another modification arose from the unusual sense of breadth. On a visit to Dovor Valley, at no great distance from New York, he was struck with what he termed the "wide-spreading vastness of the country." "All the sketches I make," he says, "are long—there is no such thing as an upright view here." He escaped, however, this inconvenience when he came to the Highlands of the Hudson—that brief Rhine scenery of America, which has so often been extolled: that cluster of superb mountains that seems to gather like a guard of honour about the Queen of Northern rivers—sheathed in rock and plumed with foliage—and which, if uncrowned with any monuments of human and historic greatness, Nature herself delights to array in such undying grace and grandeur. Here he shared the general rapture, but, in his just sense of such a subject, deferred to a time of leisure any endeavour to transcribe it.

With the "empire city of New York," as its people, with a pardonable pride, had even then begun to call it, he was necessarily struck. That grand caravanseraï at which all Europe has put up, when it has taken its way westward, either in search of a new home, a brief survey, or a wild holiday, was then full to overflowing. Its wonderful growth, wealth, and activity, and the singular beauty of its position, render it in most respects a type of its extraordinary country, and it has the interest, in addition, of being the great point of confluence at which the stream of emigration meets and mingles with the

national tide, and imparts to it new elements of productiveness and vigour. To Lover, who jotted down immediately his feeling of new objects—"since," as he says, "the longer you behold, the less vividly they impress you"—New York looked like a French city. The Boulevard air of its side streets, with their umbrageous rows of trees; its green Venetian blinds; and, in the chief commercial thoroughfares, its lines of posts and awnings to secure shade to the pavement, gave it a foreign and sultry aspect.

Native cleverness, however, was manifest in the way convenience conduced to business. Not merely these broad awnings were covered with advertisements, but the posts supporting them were utilized for the same important end, by having the letters on them painted upright, and ranged from the top to bottom, so that the quickly passing multitudes could read them with head erect. Less agreeable, however, were the pavements, which were heaped with goods and chattels that compelled the public they appealed to constantly to turn into the mud. Wondering much how such an annoyance was permitted in the free West, Lover was informed that the authorities were adverse to being too strict in their provision for the public comfort, lest they should compromise their popularity—a solution of the mystery which he thought more Irish than American.

He was also much impressed with the monster hotels and the numerous boarding-houses of New York, those evidences of a fluctuating and gregarious population; he

admired greatly the light waggon with its high wheels and easy springs, so well adapted to the primitive condition of the American roads ; and he bore testimony to the penetrating powers of the mosquitoes—the first acquaintances he made on landing—those natural *douaniers* of the Western coast, who search all visitors so impartially, and collect their dues so promptly. Whilst smarting under their exactions, he could not but envy the horses, protected by their network covering, and wish that unhappy man, the grandest animal of creation, was, in this respect at least, as well off in the Republic.

After repeating his Entertainment with great success for several evenings, he took his departure for the north, and by rail and commodious steamboat reached the leading city of New England. If New York (save in its architecture) had a French aspect in his eyes, the look of Boston, on the contrary, was as unequivocally English. Peculiarly so originally in its irregular plan, its narrow streets, and its crowded ill-constructed buildings, it was scarcely less so in its improvements, which now contributed to render it one of the handsomest cities of the Union. Strikingly English was the balance of its aristocratic and commercial features—its noble State House crowning its summit (Law protecting Wealth and Freedom), and the tranquil dignity of its adjacent dwellings—contrasted with the traffic on its wharves, the ceaseless bustle of its lower streets, and the animation of its lovely harbour, alive with the shipping of all countries. Parts of the city reminded

our traveller of Edinburgh and of London, whilst the green Venetian blinds and the spacious balconies, overflowing with their odorous trailing plants, had a picturesque which savoured more of the *Quartier Leopold* of Brussels.

Its English aspect, however, was more especially owing to its people. Every second face he met with had an unmistakable Saxon stamp, only sharpened by a rigorous climate into a harder and a keener expression; whilst that peculiar twang he had heard so much of—that distinctive mark of the genus Yankee—he found to be, after all, but another proof of the same origin,—Kent and Cornwall to this hour supplying a very creditable prototype of pure “Down East” intonation. Boston, distinguished historically as the cradle of American liberty, and so long the centre of science and literature as to be termed “the Athens of the Union,” has also, despite its Puritan founders, been always favourable to art and the drama. To the visitors who knew it at the commencement of the present century, the names of General Humphreys, of Colonel Perkins, of Messrs. Otis, Mason, Amory, and many others, were familiar, not only on account of their public and professional eminence, but their influence on society as sources of refinement and amenity. Only one of their number was surviving at the period of Lover’s visit, but they had left sons who worthily replaced them, and whose reception of him was most friendly.

At the adjacent town of Cambridge, the seat of Har-

vard University, he also made the acquaintance of some of the leading *literati*—Mr. Everett, Mr. Emerson, and Longfellow the poet, the latter of whom highly gratified him by various comments on his lyrics. The house the poet resided in was an object of interest as well as himself. It had been one of the head-quarters of Washington during the war of Independence, and, entirely built of oak, and still remaining perfectly sound, had been imported from England, in pieces, more than a century before—its wood, oddly enough, having been grown on the estate of the estimable Vassal family, the maternal and liberal ancestors of Charles James Fox. Lover also made some excursions to places of note in the vicinity, and among others to Plymouth Rock, the landing-place of the Pilgrim Fathers—a spot to which few Englishmen have failed to bend their steps, and with a reverence akin to that which carries Americans, when in England, to Stratford-upon-Avon.

All that was left of the memorable stone on which the wanderers first set foot was merely a block protruding from the beach of about two feet square (the considerate pilgrims of later days have gradually carried off the remainder, in order to keep it in the country), whilst a portion of it was elsewhere surrounded by a railing formed of boat-hooks and whale-spears, every two of which supported a label bearing the name of one of the Fathers. This method of connecting a grand event in a people's history with the symbols of local enterprise was natural enough, perhaps,

but in the eyes of an expectant Irishman did not appear to be too dignified. He failed to see the express connection between Arctic fishing and religious liberty.

Returning to Boston, Lover at length made his appearance before its public. Every seat for the night was taken, and no assembly could have been more select ; but the reception that he met with was an uncomfortable surprise. He knew his hearers to be critical, and, compared with others, to be cold ; but he had never dreamt of an auditory that could be so entirely undemonstrative. They gave him every attention possible, but scarcely a mark of approbation. Two more performances followed, which were equally well attended, and equally distinguished by a mortifying calmness. The uninitiated reader can scarcely measure such a drawback. He is not likely to be aware that to the executant at all times sympathy is power. He requires a certain amount of applause in order fully to unfold himself, and especially he needs it if he happen to be an Irishman, whose ardent nature craves response as much as a hyacinth does water.

At the same time it is very probable that Lover did his patrons some injustice on this occasion, and that they really enjoyed his efforts, however little they acknowledged it. They may have had their satisfaction in their own quiet, silent way, if it never rose to the overflowing of bursts of laughter and hearty bravos. He had not calculated the extent to which English reserve would necessarily deepen under the influence of a Western climate. A

region which could reduce the ordinary Anglo-Saxon robustness to a mere mass of thews and sinews, could scarcely fail to encrust its demeanour with a thicker coat of frost. It was owing to this circumstance that Irish emigrants had always been more attracted by the South—there was so much more of their own complexion about its jovial, life-enjoying planters.

Lover was also not aware, that if he only could have managed to pass a year or two in Boston, its same frigid, reticent people would probably have surprised him with their capacity for thawing—would have shown him that, with all their blank gelidity to strangers, they had warmth enough, if not exuberance, to bestow upon their friends. My father, who had known them for almost a quarter of a century, said that the New Englander of the streets was, to all his intimate acquaintance, the heartiest of Englishmen indoors. Such a people would be sure to be misinterpreted by visitors—birds of passage who saw them in their winter, and could not perch with them till it was spring—flying travellers who observe only the momentary and the individual, and yet detail them but too often as the abiding and the entire.

Lover was, however, to be further enlightened upon the physical theory of sympathy. If the thermometer was low at Boston, at every neighbouring place he visited it descended lower still. The frigorific mood enlarged as the literary and artistic lessened, till at length, at the town of Salem, of old witchcraft and Quaker memory, the tempera-

ture may be said to have fairly gone down to zero. He felt like an Arctic voyager who had drifted among icebergs. Stoutly enduring up till then, at last his philosophy gave way, and in his journal he explodes in a string of well-selected similes—"Frogs, snowballs, icicles—no name for coldness can describe them."

Most inflictions, however, have their offsets. If it was the fate of our mirthful traveller to be congealed by the New England temperament, he was reanimated by its humour. Many will remember our own amusement when, some forty years ago, we first became aware of its originality and freshness. How every one was struck with its peculiar ingenuity, its dealing purely with ideas, yet not at all in the way of wit, but as instances of the shrewdest insight or of the gravest exaggeration. If Irish humour may be defined as a ludicrous confusion of ideas, that of New England was often their distortion under the most amazing air of gravity. It was the long-stiffened Puritan mind taking suddenly to fanciful diversions. The "Trip to America" of the elder Matthews, gave us the first glimpse of this comic novelty; a further and truer sense of it was produced by Mr. Hackett, whose assumptions of American character—Kentuckian, Dutch, and Yankee—were equally remarkable. The greatest impression it made, however, must be accorded to the immortal "Clockmaker"—the incomparable Sam Slick, whose sayings and doings placed it before us with all that mingling of a sharp sagacity and a quiet covert sarcasm that, up to this hour, if ever equalled, has never been surpassed.

Still the "Clockmaker," it must be remembered, is of comparatively modern origin. More than a century before the tracing of Judge Haliburton's vivid picture, the Yankee pedlar was in existence, and tramped the colonies from end to end as one of their most humorous celebrities. With his pack of wares and "fixings," his "soft sawder," and his thirst for bargainings, he stirred and amazed the phlegmatic Dutch as much as he amused or worried the jocund, hospitable Virginians. He was, however, more than a mere packman. He was a universal genius, who responded to the wants and difficulties of a new and thinly settled country. He had a spice in him of a lawyer and of a doctor—and he could turn his hand, if needed, to carpentry, farriery, harness-making, wheelwright work, and pig-killing. He was, in fact, a Backwoods *vade mecum*—a grand perambulating utility, that never strode into a village or drew up at a farmhouse but he could find some implement to repair or some necessity to furnish.

It must be owned that he declined at times into a little sharp practising and "smartness"—his was not the rigidest standard of morals when he saw the chance of a good bargain; and consequently his victims were often urged into their own exaggerations, and revenged themselves by talking of his "horn gun-flints," his "wooden nutmegs," and his red flannel "sassages." It was at a later day that he took to clockmaking, and became famous for his inventions, when the manufacturing spirit was gradually rising in New England—and it was at a later date, again, that he began

to indulge in those Munchausenisms which, imported from the East, expanded in his favouring soil into such luxuriant proportions. Every one must remember the pleasant extravagance of a man who was so swift, that in running round a tree he caught a sight of his own back—of another who was so vigorous, that he never sneezed but he threw a somersault—and of a third, who was so thin, that it took two pair of eyes to see him. But, of all its instances, the one that best exemplifies its spirit is, I fancy, that which used to be told in connection with the Mexican war, when it was a question whether the Americans could send their cavalry into Texas, owing to the deficiency of grass,—whereupon it was suggested that the horses should be supported by the force of imagination—should be provided with green spectacles, and fed upon fine shavings!

Lover had another consolation in the lovely weather that was setting in—the exquisite “Indian summer,” which commences at the close of October, and usually lasts about a month. Like Niagara, Harper’s Ferry, the Highlands of the Hudson, and other wonders, this is a feature of America upon which all visitors have agreed. They have wanted words to convey a notion of the delicious feeling of a period which mingles summer’s warmth and not its heat, with autumn’s freshness without its chill—a delightful compromise, which, free alike from transitions and extreme, kindly repairs the exhaustion of one season in order to brace against another. One of the old settlers used to think it formed the atmosphere of Eden, and was

mercifully permitted to visit America in order to remind its people of their loss. It had a more practical effect on Lover, since it inspired him to the production of one of his most graceful compositions,—a little delicate emblem of life that, whether in its words or its music, can scarcely fail to be appreciated. I give its concluding verse:—

And thus, dear girl, if early years
Have drowned the germ of joy in tears,
A later gleam of hope appears,
Just like the Indian summer.
And ere the snows of age descend,
Oh, trust me, dear one—changeless friend—
Our falling years may brightly end,
Just like the Indian summer.

On his way back to New York our traveller visited Providence, Rhode Island, memorable as the home of Roger Williams and religious freedom in America—Newport, distinguished as the residence of the illustrious Bishop Berkeley—and New Haven, in Connecticut, pleasantest of seaports and of retreats for the studious and the weary. Laid out in parallelograms, its abundant avenues and gardens have an amount of leafage in the summer that effaces its formality, and gives it all the appearance of a town dropped in a wood. Picturesque, too, as well as pleasant, with the hills at its back which break so agreeably the level lines of the Atlantic coast, it possesses, also, in one of the latter, a spot of some historic interest. This

is the well-known "Judges' cave," where Dixwell, Goff, and Whalley—the three regicides—found shelter on escaping to the colonies at the return of Charles II. The elaborate account of their perils and wanderings, written by President Stiles, of Yale College, which shows how faithfully their secret was kept, preserves also a tradition in connection with the above retreat.

The hills in question at this period were frequented by wild beasts, and one night, when the unhappy exiles had retired to their rest, a catamount, or small panther, found his way to the mouth of their cave, and putting in his head, "blazed his eyeballs," says the president, "in so horrible a manner, and, moreover, set up such a squalling, as greatly to affright them," one of the party taking to his heels and flying down the mountain. Shades of the Ironsides, one might exclaim, what a calumny is this! What a story to be told of three of the bravest of your number, who had fought for their country's liberty, and even dared to kill their king! Many a royalist, of course, has cited it as a proof of the terrors of conscience—has said the fugitives were burdened with such a sense of their great crime that, when they gazed on the fiery eyeballs, they thought the evil one was come for them. And yet their worst enemies will admit that, had they been roused by their pursuers, and not a mysterious beast, they would have sprung to their feet, have grasped their swords, and fought as valiantly as ever.

At New York Lover's labours were renewed with all

their first success, and he was on the point of departing for the south, to escape the winter which was approaching, when he was subjected to a blow that was one of the heaviest of his existence—he received the news of the death of his wife. I have said enough to indicate how unbroken had been their happiness, and how great was his pain in leaving her—a course to which only the most stringent motives had compelled him; and little doubt would be felt upon the point could I lift the veil of privacy, and transfer from his Journal the touching expressions of his grief and desolation. It had been a great source of grief to him that he was absent both from his father and his mother at their death, and now the loss of one still dearer was similarly embittered; and he naturally shrank from the possibility of dying himself in a distant country, and being denied a last farewell to those who only could console him. This affliction robbed him of all power of exertion for a time; but at length reflection and a sense of duty roused him to a right view of his conduct—he regained his self-possession, and departed for the south.

With Philadelphia—the Quaker city—whose appearance reflects so many of the characteristics of its founders—tranquillity, wealth, healthfulness, and, not least, a staid formality (it is a city of right angles)—our traveller was much pleased; and scarcely less with Baltimore, the virtual capital of Maryland, pleasantly built and admirably situated on one of the finest harbours of America, and

forming the centre of one of its most hospitable and cultivated States. It is an agreeable fact to remember that almost from the date of its foundation the name of this State has been pronounced "Merryland," as if in due acknowledgment of the spirits of its people. At both these places our executant was favourably received, and thence he hurried on to Washington, where Congress was in session, and to which he was accredited with several letters of introduction.

It is scarcely necessary to say that, up to the period of this visit the legislative metropolis of the great Republic was probably unexampled as an architectural anticlimax. Projected fifty years before, with much advantage of position, and upon a scale of becoming grandeur (after the designs of Major L'Enfant), its massive Capitol forming its centre, and imperial avenues intersecting it, of 160 feet in width, its appearance to our traveller was that of "a large straggling village, with patches of houses here and there, and swampy flats lying between them." What with the vastness of its plan, and the meagreness of its construction, it seemed to a friend of Basil Hall's "as if some giant had been scattering his child's toys about the ground at random." A close observer—Mr. N. P. Willis—was even more ludicrously impressed by it. To him it looked as though a collection of brick houses had been rained down on an open plain, and that every man had made a street amidst them in reference to his own door.* And quite as

* "Illustrations of American Scenery."

jocose about its appearance were American observers generally; they called it "the city of magnificent distances," which some one improved by saying that the most distant prospect it possessed was that of its own completion.

And yet, in spite of all these sarcasms, this city was not a failure. Divested at its birth of the means of expansion, either by trade or manufactures, in order to secure dignity and quiet to its legislative labours, of course its growth would be mainly social, and would depend upon the time when America should accumulate sufficient leisure and refinement to create an aristocracy who would be attracted by its rank and seclusion to make it their permanent abode. Nor ought that day to be very distant, if we may judge by the superior character of its society in recent years, which, under the influence of foreign travel, and in the presence of many embassies, exhibits the strength of the native intellect softening into a marked grace of expression.

Washington has further been described as "the city of one building"—its lordly Capitol, which architecturally is only supported by the Post-office; and yet that one building may lay claim to be numbered among the most notable productions of modern art. It is a Capitol that on all hands has been pronounced worthy of the country. Commanding in its position, massive and simple in its proportions, and almost unequalled in approach, it is also fortunate in its surrounding scenery, and in the good

views that may be obtained of it, especially from a neighbouring eminence which puts the broad Potomac at its back. Its most poetic aspect, however, is the one it wears in winter, when, as Mr. Willis so vividly tells us, it rises in its dazzling whiteness from the surface of adjacent snow "like some admirable creation of the frost."

But our traveller by this time had made acquaintance with American cold. If he had found the heat something terrible,—an excess only to be endured by means of a good supply of baths and of mysterious national drinks, its opposite extreme was just as trying, seeming to need all the internal fire he had been so assiduous to subdue. It was rather late this year in its arrival, but it made amends by its intensity, and, consistently enough, formed the grand transition of the season. Lover, writing to his daughters in January, 1847, says that on the first day of the year the weather was uncomfortably warm; it was moist and balmy directly afterwards; on the 7th the frost set in; and on the 8th, when he left New York, the cold was, without exception, the severest he had ever known. On crossing the Delaware, "the air was keen enough to cut holes through your clothes." Snow was falling, rivers were freezing, and sleighing and skating were about to commence. Almost in a night he had been carried from the climate of Italy to that of Russia.

Such changes are not very favourable to those who have to exercise their throats, and, as no native genius had yet invented mucous membranes of India-rubber, he

was constantly getting hoarse and being compelled to suspend his labours. Still he rallied, however, and worked on, and was even strong enough to add to these exhaustions of the season the almost greater ones of travelling. For the first two months of the new year he was incessantly in motion, making frequent return visits between the various cities he came to ; often journeying all night, and through rain, hail, and snow, doing his 120 miles a day. He worked harder, in fact, at this period than he had ever done in his life. It is true he had much to sustain him. He retained his health ; he had great success ; he made friends wherever he went, and he had the prospect of soon emerging into a milder and kindlier atmosphere.

But even winter, with all its trials, was not without its novelty and its attraction. It was on an infinitely grander scale than Lover had ever beheld in Europe. The snow falls to a depth and the rivers freeze to a thickness that square but little with the phenomena of our insular experience. The mere fact that this season in America lasts from three months to five calls up of itself, to English minds, a new and strange train of ideas. All this severity, however, has its offsets, both in the shape of advantages and pleasures. The weather in the central States becomes settled even where most capricious—Winter, a despot that allows of no revolts against its rule, chaining down turbulent transitions in a strong and terrible tranquillity. Consequently, you know what you have to endure, and prepare matters accordingly. One

good result of this intensity is the large amount of indoor existence that it necessitates and brightens, and which, sustaining the domestic spirit of the Anglo-Saxon populace, braces so much the national character against other and relaxing influences.

Then the pleasures of the period are numerous and positive. Skating, which in this country exists but for a week, and then is only remarkable in being improvised at a day's notice, becomes in America not only a fixed enjoyment, but a convenience. As soon as the rivers have got frozen, much of the transit is transferred to their surface, and the skater finds enlarged facilities both for business and social intercourse. Even the railway, with its chances of being blocked up by the snow, scarcely supersedes the skate along the line of a river bank, when the latter ensures its possessor equal speed, in addition to a healthful and inspiring exercise. I can well remember, as a boy, seeing this pastime connected with many pleasant domestic incidents. I lived beside the Hudson, and often saw its old Dutch settlers, man and wife, or brother and sister, gliding by on a skating visit to relatives or friends in distant villages, proposing a stretch of some twenty miles, which they could do with ease in an hour and a half;—or, better still, an entire family taking to the ice for a little exercise—the grandfather or mother comfortably wrapped up and deposited in an armchair, that was placed on runners and then propelled with the speed of the wind by a pair of sturdy grandsons,—whilst father and

mother skated by their side, and a bevy of buxom daughters flew after them like a flock of swallows.

Sleighing is another great resource, and of a still wider utility. Not only traffic has to depend on it, but a large amount of social happiness. The supper and the dance parties arranged to take place at a country tavern many miles from the point of starting, numbered the sleighing of the excursion as not the least pleasurable part of it. Well I remember being woke at night with the merry ringing of their bells, and, on stealing to my bedroom window, seeing a train of some dozen sledges, each with its flambeau at its back, dart by like a band of sprites going on the errand of some Erl king. But sleighing, let me add, was devoted, in many of the States, to higher purposes than junketing; it was the grand vehicle for courtship. A swift drive through a keen blast at the rate of twenty miles an hour melted the heart of many a fair one, if it pinched her cheek and purpled her nose.

The New England girls especially were not amenable to classic and poetic influences in this matter. No Italian skies or "Favonian gales" did they require to induce tenderness, but a good Nova Zembla atmosphere, which, driving the blood into their hearts, made those delicate organs all the fuller. The car of Venus was a sleigh, and her softly floating doves a pair of Narraganset ponies. Lover, who witnessed this amusement on numerous occasions during his visit, saw a matrimonial use in it, which, with his usual humour and felicity, he transferred to verse

and music, under the title of "Slaying the Deer"—an allusion to Indian hunting which, he shows, is much transcended by the happier American method of "Sleighbing the Dear" at their own doors. I quote a portion of the effusion :—

If your Dear's temper's crost,
Pray at once for the frost,
And fix her right into the sleigh ;
If she would she can't scold,
For the weather's so cold,
Her mouth she can't open at all :
In vain would she cry,
For the tears in her eye
Would be frozen before they could fall

CHAPTER XIII.

1847, 1848.—The South—Richmond—Southern Society—The Aristocracy of the West—Their Visitor and Critic—Contrast of Virginians and Carolinians—Testimony to the latter by Achille Murat—The Black Features of the South—The Negroes—Their Stupidity—A Waiter's aids to Sleep—Specimens of Negro Humour—The Irish Antipathy to Negroes—A Darwinian Justification—Travelling in the South—Cars and Taverns—City Hotels—Their old Colonial uses—Insecurity—Considerate Landlords—“Revolvers to be had at the Bar”—Southern Habits—Horsemanship—Old Saying as to the Carolinians—Southern Vegetation—Savannah—Its Shade and Ventilation—Its Woods—Their “Cathedral Aisles” and “Cobwebs”—Journey to the West—The Old American Stage-coach—The “Corduoy Road”—Condition of Travellers who ride over it—Improvement on Byron's lines in *The Corsair*—Macon and its Indian Reminiscences—Embarking on the Alabama—Its noble flow—The Song it prompted—Arrival at New Orleans, the “New York of the South”—Its French Origin and Aspect—Its Cathedral and its Levee—Contrasts of New Orleans—Its Summer Solitude—Its Winter Gaiety—Its Wealth and Growth—Its Foundation—A City built on a Raft—The old French Citizen of New Orleans—Loss of Vivacity by Residence—Their Plantations in Louisiana unchanged since their first Settlement—Pleasant features of Creole Life—Its Shadows—The Creole Girls born to Dishonour—Sketching at New Orleans, and Song-Writing—The Alabama—Henry Clay's Eulogium—Sail up the Mississippi—Its Grandeur and its Monotony—Drinking and Gambling in its Steamboats—The River an Unsuspected Revolutionist—Its low Banks—Variety of Climate, &c.—Memphis—Lover's Apostrophe—The Region of the Future Worshipping the Past—The Inundations—Their Sublime Effect—A Domestic Incident—The Dove-cot—The Ohio and its Contrasts—Old Kentuckian Character and Humour.

BIDDING farewell to Washington, where his reception had been most flattering, and where, he says, his room “was

so full of Senators, it looked like an adjourned meeting of the Chambers," Lover reached Richmond, the capital of Virginia, pleasantly situated on James River, and, like many other American capitals, on the slope of an agreeable eminence, which it surmounted with its State House. Here he was gratified by making his first acquaintance with Southern society. I can have no occasion to dwell on its many delightful characteristics—its urbanity, vivacity, and almost princely hospitality, which, in their union in many quarters with considerable refinement, made them so much resemble the superior Irish manners of the past century; whilst the position of the planters generally—that of a class unconnected with any business or profession, but living independently on the produce of their estates—was the only one approaching to that of the European aristocracies.

Of course, accredited as was my friend with introductions and public repute, he was not the least likely person to be welcomed by such a class, but at the same time as he proposed to become their critic as well as visitor, he began to feel all the difficulties attaching to such an office. A man who was always on the wing was not exactly in a position to collect materials for a book. He would have no leisure to gain an insight into any facts of depth or novelty, would enjoy no friendly intimacies, no opportunities to see society in what may be called its morning dress. All that would be left him would be to repeat the usual stereotyped descriptions—the usual cataloguing

of sights and places, of modes of transit and states of weather; or, if it was felt that such a process was likely to be a dull one, to indulge in a vein of sarcasm which could only prove amusing because it was ill-natured, and probably ungrateful. Lover was certainly not the man to adopt either of these methods; and, accordingly, it is no wonder he soon resigned an undertaking which promised so little satisfaction, either to the public or himself.

Still, to the hastiest of travellers, American life would exhibit many external traits and contrasts, and there was one which its present observer could scarcely fail to notice—the courtly, almost dignified demeanour of the Virginians, arising partly from their sense of ancestry as descendants of English gentry (of which, it will be remembered, the illustrious Washington was an example), as contrasted with the more hilarious and festive spirit of the Carolinians, of whom the settlement had been almost as much Irish as it was English, and who found their warm, luxurious climate so much in harmony with themselves. Even here, however, it was not difficult to meet with a high standard of manners, as was vouched for by an authority not less than that of Achille Murat, who, under Napoleon, had been connected with so many European embassies, and who pronounced the Carolinian gentlemen to be among the truest he had ever known.

But there was not only society, there was a populace in the South, which, if not the more agreeable, was certainly the stranger feature of the two. Our traveller was now in

the Slave States, and in a letter to his daughters expatiates on the general darkness which had suddenly surrounded him. On board of a steamboat he was roused to breakfast by the civilities of a black steward, and afterwards attended to "by a little bevy of black sprites ; whilst the black tea and the black fish (a species peculiar to that quarter), the black trays, the black jugs, and the black-handled knives were all of a marked consistency—and even the day that had just arisen seemed almost as sable as the rest."

Lover, however, it must be owned, was not much attracted by the negroes. He saw nothing, in the first place, to excite his sympathies in their condition—nothing of that cruel conduct of masters he had heard so much about in England ; whilst, in the next place, unluckily, he was annoyed by their untidyness, and bored to death by their stupidity. A waiter at one place, who was particularly inattentive, replied to all his expostulations with a curious fact in his own experience—"Ah, Massa ! you so like a gentlum I know in Georgia ;" whilst another, who would persist in waking him up at five o'clock in the morning, always excused himself on the ground of supplying a new class of sedatives—"Massa sleep all de better wid um fire light and um boots brushed."

Nevertheless, I cannot help thinking that poor Cæsar, with all his dulness, has his intervals of brightness, and even a certain kind of humour, though the latter may be a little Irish in its confusion of ideas. Every one has heard of the farm-servant who, ordered to report on a sow's

litter, said—"Dar's ten ob um, massa ; and besides dat dar's anudder—but he run about so much I couldn't count um !" and perhaps also of the negro driver who, whenever his passengers grumbled at a stony part of the road, always drove them into a ditch, in order to put them into better temper. Lover, however, had the excuse that Irishmen in general have no great liking for the negroes. The lower class especially have often refused to work with them, and I have heard of an Hibernian whose antipathy might almost have pleaded the authority of Darwin. He maintained that the dark race were originally monkeys, and that the great mistake of the Americans was in allowing them to talk before they had been properly educated.

Another trial of my friend's composure was the state of travelling in the South. The railroads were incomplete, and what there was of them was very rough ; and rougher still were the cars, that dashed along them at full speed, rolling and pitching like ships at sea, and threatening every moment to turn over. And in keeping with them were the taverns—places of the most primitive simplicity, at one of which, where the passengers stopped at daybreak to wash, they were provided with a couple of tubs and a solitary piece of soap. In the cities, the accommodation was, of course, something better ; but even here not too abundant, owing to the comparatively little traffic—the visitors being chiefly to the "bar" of the establishment, where the "liquoring," as it was termed, was maintained throughout the day, and all questions of trade and politics found acceptable solutions.

This discomfort, however, was not to be charged solely on climate and isolation ; there was about it some remaining influence of the old colonial manners—when the real hotels of the South were the hospitable planters' houses, and the taverns on the roads were little other than collecting boxes, where, when travellers arrived, they were pounced on by the jovial residents, and carried off to better quarters. It was further to be said of these inns, that they were not invariably secure. A frequent notice was put up in them enjoining you to "lock your door at night" as a safeguard against robberies—American thieves, like their betters, "going South" to spend the winter. I have heard, indeed, of a considerate landlord who would kindly supplement the above warning with the words "Revolvers to be had at the bar!" feeling the propriety of all his customers being placed upon a level.

Externally, Southern society was not wanting in distinctions, and among them was the circumstance that nearly every gentleman was mounted. In Virginia, such a habit seemed to be naturally enough inherited from a colony of cavaliers ; but here it had the excuse of greater heat and a sandy region. The Carolinians were indeed proverbial for preferring any legs to their own, and it was said of them in early days, that they would walk a mile to catch a horse if they only intended to ride two. Nature also had a novel aspect in the Southern vegetation, which induced Lover to resume his pencil after many months' disuse. His journeyings had lain hitherto through a succes-

sion of "pine barrens," whose lugubrious monotony had but small attraction for a draughtsman; but at Charleston matters mended, and still more so at Savannah, one of those charmingly-planned cities that are laid out in square and avenue to ensure the freest ventilation, and with a plenitude of foliage to obtain the fullest shade.

It had also the advantage of surrounding woods, which did all justice to the climate. At one of these, called Bonaventura, consisting chiefly of live oak, the branches were interlaced in the fashion of the aisles of a cathedral, from which depended festoons of moss, "that looked," remarks Lover, "like the accumulated cobwebs of centuries, that had never been swept away." The variety of parasites that clung to them, under the general name of "vines," was also a striking feature; one—the jasmine vine—especially, bearing a profusion of yellow flowers, and giving out an exquisite odour, that recalled the English wallflower. The palmetto was also abundant, with its green and fanlike gracefulness; the wild orange; and the magnolia, the flowering giant of the southern forest, adding grandeur to the general beauty.

After a run along the sea-board, that was as profitable as it was pleasant, Lover turned his face to the west, and again plunging into pine woods, enlarged his knowledge of southern travelling by his transference from the cars to an old American stage-coach. This was a machine like a large omnibus (minus the luxury of springs), built to contain some fifteen passengers, with the seats set transversely

—the access at the front, and not the back—which, with a ton of luggage at its tail, was mostly dragged on northern roads by four horses at full gallop. Here, however, the pace was slower, and the punishment condign. Lover, writing to his daughters, compares the treatment of those who rode in it to that of “peas shaken in a bag,” and his feeling, when he alighted, to a “sense of wholesale dislocation,” or that highly limp condition in which “a man feels like a turkey that had been boned for a Christmas pie.”

“Bump and thump, smash and crash, rumble and tumble,” are the terms he uses, his way lying probably over what was called a “corduroy road,”—formed by laying logs transversely over swampy or clayey ground, and thus ensuring that every foot of progress should be registered by a jolt. Pace in such a case was hopeless—it was simple torture long drawn out; and our sufferer, remembering that Byron makes his Conrad say of the storm at sea, “I loved its roughness for the speed it gave,” exclaims almost pathetically, “Ah, if we had had that speed on land!” This journey, however, was relieved by charming scenery and summer weather, whilst it was enlivened at the town of Macon by a new and amusing piece of experience. This had been a frontier Indian station some five-and-twenty years before, and during the “Evening” he gave its public, they made it a point to whistle when they were moderately pleased, and to break into an Indian yell when their satisfaction was abundant.

At Montgomery he embarked on the placid bosom of

the Alabama, and its silent and solemn flow through the luxuriant forests and unbroken solitudes of the still primeval-looking south inspired the production of a lyric, which paints with equal delicacy the traits of the scene and the writer's feelings. I quote the closing lines :—

However far, however near,
To me alike thou'rt still most dear—
In thought, sweet Love, thou'rt with me here,
 On the winding Alabama.
The watch-dog's bark on shore I hear ;
It tells me that some home is near,
And memory drops affection's tear
 On the distant Alabama.

At length, reaching Mobile, and crossing the waters of Lake Pontchartrain, Lover found himself in New Orleans, the great commercial *entrepôt* of the Mississippi valley—the “New York of the South,” as it has been appropriately called. No city could have exhibited more marked signs of its origin. The capital of a French colony, and one that the French had occupied only some forty years before, it still retained its founders' spirit, and very generally their language, as well as their mediæval architecture—its gable-ends, its jutting roofs, its heavy cornices and ample balconies—which at every turn in the old town reminded the visitor of Europe. The cathedral, its most prominent structure, spoke of the Spanish occupation, during which this massive building received its towers and other additions ; but, of course, the chief feature was the Levee—that

gigantic quay, which, extending some hundred miles along the river, had here its triple banks of ships and its forty or fifty monster steamers, and grandly fulfilled the double end of withstanding the waters of the north and west, whilst it heaped on its broad surface the varied produce that they bore to it. The past and present of America could scarcely be better typified than in the contrast which exists between the quiet air of the old town and this vast spectacle of commercial energy.

New Orleans, however, is distinguished by more wonders than her enterprise. A perfect desert during summer, its heat developing a malaria from the surrounding swamps and marshes, which only negroes, dogs, and alligators have the power of enduring—in the winter it is not only salubrious, but its climate is thought so genial, that it attracts the gay and wealthy from all parts of the south, and exhibits a dissipation that would not be despised even by Parisians. It has its French and English theatres, its masked balls, its *fetes* and operas, its grand hotels, bazaars, and lotteries, and probably more gambling rooms than any city in the Union. Nor is this change its only marvel. It stands on a foundation that is akin to the Delta of the Mississippi—a deposit of tree and sand, swept down by the mighty flood in the lapse of countless ages, and which, rescued from it by the Levee, is little firmer than a quicksand, and probably at no part is more than a hundred feet in thickness. Below that you come to water.

New Orleans is accordingly a city built upon a raft!

The river is not only beside and above, it is positively under it. It may be truly called, in Western language, "About the grandest consarn afloat." Its continued safety, therefore, under such circumstances, has often troubled its inhabitants. A serious fracture of the Levee might submerge it in six hours; a subsidence of its foundations would engulf it even sooner. These possibilities, however, have no effect on its buoyant visitors, who laugh and dance away as though they were bounding over granite. France recovers, in their persons, full possession of her old settlement. The prophecies of Jefferson may be justified upon its Levee, but the lively emissaries of the Grand Monarque return to life in its hotels and residences.

To the more rational patrons of New Orleans, Lover's arrival was a welcome incident. His songs and stories gave their amusements a desirable variety, whilst nowhere could his society have been more thoroughly appreciated. Indeed, it may be said to have been appreciated too much. Their reception of him was so cordial, that he often responded to it in exertions almost as great as he made in public. He would join their attractive circles after concluding his Entertainment, and then frequently be induced to sing all his songs over again. He little dreamt, when complaining of the public coldness in the north, of the penalty he would have to pay for the warmth of other quarters. Everything, however, appears to have been peculiar about New Orleans, and in one shape or another to have involved some little contrast.

The social spirit I have described, and which was so eminently French, was half imbibed from the climate, and mostly exhibited by Americans. The French themselves, *pur et simple*, who inhabited the old town, and were to be found in Louisiana, were the very reverse of their accustomed character, seeming to have renounced all vivacity when they surrendered their old allegiance. The stranger who passed from the crowd of either the active, progressive traders, or the mere pleasure-hunters of the city, into one of the old French plantations, lying beyond or up the river, probably experienced one of the greatest surprises of his life. He found he had come upon a place where the clock of history had been standing still for above a century and a half. In manners, looks, and usages, all was still as expressly French as on the first days of its settlement, whilst the old elastic spirit, the national gaiety and ardour, had declined into a tranquillity that was almost Quaker-like in its sedateness.

As you advanced up Louisiana, and especially on the Red River, you came on villages as well as families that were as singularly distinguished, though at the same time it was very interesting to contemplate these little communities, which, under the mild paternal sway of their Seigneurs and their priests, had so long and peacefully existed undisturbed by emigration, and unshaken by the storms which had convulsed their mother country. Creole life, as the French was called, if not particularly enlightened, nor, up to that period, much indoctrinated with the

principles of progress, was still affectionate and kindly, with many pleasures and few wants, and also some extenuations—even slavery losing its hideousness, in the patriarchal system, which regarded the poor black, not as a chattel of the estate, but only a lower member of the family.

Creole life, however, on the other hand, had its shadows as well as brightness, which, to English eyes especially, obscured its better features. In one of its homes that Lover visited, he met with several engaging girls, highly accomplished as well as beautiful, who, on account of their maternal origin, were forbidden to marry white men. The drop of black blood in their veins, infinitesimal as it seemed, was still sufficient to cut them off from any honourable alliance. The loveliest and most refined of them, if she spurned the degradation of being *placée*, as it was termed, was only permitted to become the wife and the mother of a slave. If the civil war of America had accomplished no other end than this, the justice it rendered to these poor victims would hallow it to the end of time. The negro, in a thousand instances, was unconscious of his debasement—bondage to him was but the privation of so much ease and coarse indulgence; but with them, there was not merely the revolt of refinement against barbarity—there was the cry of a moral sense, which proclaimed the rights of the body, because that body contained a soul!

At New Orleans Lover had the gratification of being enabled to resume his sketching. The cathedral was an excellent subject, of which he completed a couple of

drawings, and the old town was quite an assemblage of quaint and picturesque details. There were also some good points to be found about the neighbourhood, especially in the plantations that lay across the river, which, as if unconscious of the sarcasm, the people called "Algiers." The shipping also was attractive, with the huge steamers coming and going; and an agreeable feature was formed by the fruit boats, heaped with oranges, pines, and grapes, which their sable vendors, in their broad sombreros and their blue and pink striped shirts, commended to departing vessels in a jumble of all languages and a medley of all tones. Lover also pursued his song-writing. He wrote and composed several lyrics, which he despatched to his London publishers; the most successful of their number being the one he had written on a southern river, and which, in addition to other rewards, procured him a highly flattering compliment from the eminent senator, Henry Clay. On hearing it sung, the latter exclaimed, "Hereafter the Alabama will probably be better known through its poet, than its geographer."

On the hospitality of this city it would be needless indeed to dwell; and if Lover was compelled to own that "roast or boiled turkey and ham" appeared a little too often in its *menu*, he was happy, as an offset, to acknowledge the excellence of its claret—rarely equalled, as he asserted, since the great critical days of five-bottle clubs in Ireland. Linger on till the advance of spring gave the revellers warning to depart, he took his leave of this

extraordinary city, with its excitements and surprises, but whose acquaintance in all respects he had been well repaid in making ; and with a large party of his friends, who were returning to their homes in safer regions, embarked in one of those gigantic steamers he had so often observed and sketched,—the saloon of which, when lighted up, gave him a notion that will at least be appreciated by a Londoner—that of the Lowther Arcade afloat.

Every one approaches the Mississippi with a due sense of its grandeur. Regard it as a whole, and it is difficult indeed not to find oneself agreeing in the rhapsody of the Kentuckian—"It's a big sea that has been straightened out." A river that drains with its numerous branches above a fifth of North America ; that runs, in union with the Missouri, a course of more than four thousand miles ; that attains a speed of four miles an hour, and frequently exceeds a mile in width—simply to describe is to glorify it. To have resisted such a current, and thereby to have quadrupled the commerce of the West, seems to be the crowning triumph of steam, and you wonder not a little why no statue to Robert Fulton is erected on the Levee. Ascend the mighty stream, however, and your admiration begins to wane.

Day by day, be it your fate to gaze on nothing but an expanse of water, sweeping through interminable woods, without a gleam of mountain or meadow to break their long lugubrious shadows—to meet with scarce a trace of life for several hundred miles together, save here and

there a wood station—or, rarer still, a clearing which, as Lover happily says, “looks like a snip cut out of the mantle of primeval vegetation by the shears of human energy,”—and your sense of the sublime, however powerful, dwindles into one of pure exhaustion. You get so weary that you catch at last at the merest trifle that diverts attention, any bird that flies above you, or any dog barking on the shore. When a journey has this effect, we can scarcely wonder that restoratives are not always employed within due bounds.

The lively Southerners who are subjected to this stupefying transit, rush to juleps as the only means of sustaining animation. “I guess I have yawned so much this morning,” said a sufferer on one occasion, “if I don’t file my jaws a little I’ve a smart chance of splitting up.” Another escape from the voyage’s penalty is the still worse resource of gambling. It became so excessive at one period as to be forbidden in many boats, often lasting day and night, and resulting in the interference of such arbiters as knives and pistols. This was occasioned, however, chiefly by the gangs of sharpers who infested the river, and who, with the favourite game of poker—a sort of mixture of loo and brag—succeeded but too effectually in stirring the fires of cupidity. Their chosen victims were the boatmen who had [carried produce down to New Orleans in their “flats,” as they are called, and who, returning home by the steamers, were frequently plundered in a night of the entire earnings of the summer.

With all its monotony, however, the great river has its features. There is its dull, obnoxious colour, its murky brown—so often regretted as impairing its picturesqueness—which, looked at geographically, is an object of so much interest. The “Father of Waters,” as the Indians call him, is very Indian in complexion, and owes his unattractive tint to the amount of earth he holds in solution. He is an unsuspected revolutionist of the most formidable type. Silently and swiftly he is always at work in dislodging a portion of the Northern continent, and carrying it off to be deposited on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico. Who can tell, then, how he may narrow the Gulf’s dimensions in course of time, and in so doing repair the damage of that terrible convulsion which, in the remote past, according to Jefferson, tore the two continents asunder.

Another peculiarity is the low bank of the river, which, instead of shelving into the water, is often a submerged cliff, that goes sheer down to a great depth, and so enables steamers ascending the stream to escape its force by “hugging” the shore. The variety of climate along its path is also very interesting,—vegetation blooming at one point when it has scarcely begun at another; and very striking in certain quarters is the tenacity of vegetable life—a tree barked and partly burnt in the process of destruction being seen to spread above the line to which the axe and fire had reached, and wave its foliage as if in triumph at the failure of man’s hostility. At Natchez and at Vicksburg, the hedges were covered with Cherokee roses and the

white flowers of the dogwood (at night lit up with fire-flies, the gleaming harbingers of summer); whilst at Memphis Lover had to turn from the delightful affluence of nature to the meagre vanity of man.

"Shades of Sesostriis and the Ptolemies," he very naturally exclaims, "what think you of this? Your great capital reproduced in a row of cabins on a river's bank—the centre of a majestic empire, imaged in a clearing of the wilderness." And yet Lover might have felt this was an absurdity capable of astonishing something more than royal ghosts. The great region of the future hankering after a half barbaric past—a young republic trying to robe itself in the mouldering glory of a dead despotism! How inexplicable this seems, unless the fervid bestowers of these imperial names on baby settlements (Cairo and Athens were at hand) believed in the circular theory of Vico—that the old age of one country is the childhood of another, and thus it was America's duty to begin where antiquity had left off.

Further on, our traveller contemplates a far more majestic object. It was the period of inundations, which were much higher this year than usual, and which, rolling the mighty flood far over its natural bounds, presented the amazing spectacle of forests growing in the water. The effect was heightened by the mists which collect on the stream on these occasions, and which, as they rise, give the vast prospect the air of a magical tableau. The impression conveyed to Lover was

unusually sublime—it was that of the grand event in the sacred record, the subsidence of the waters after the deluge. The charm of the scene was not diminished by a little domestic incident. The woodmen who live along the shore build their cabins upon piles in order to protect them in this emergency, and near one of them, whose threshold was scarcely out of danger, a little dove-cot placed in a tree was swinging from its branch in safety. This circumstance prompted the poet to the production of some graphic lines which he afterwards recited with great success in his entertainment. I quote the opening verse of *The Flooded Hut of the Mississippi*:—

On the wide rolling river at eve set the sun,
And the long toiling day of the woodman was done,
And he flung down the axe that had felled the huge tree,
And his own little daughter he placed on his knee.
She looked up with smiles at a dove-cot o'erhead
Where, circling around, flew the pigeons she fed ;
And more fondly the sire clasped his child to his breast,
As he kissed her—and called her the bird of *his* nest.

Landing at St. Louis, and re-embarking on his way to Louisville, Kentucky, Lover entered the Ohio, and was struck like others with its contrast to the vehement Mississippi—its calm and silvery flow, and its grassy margins, softening into a grace that had more the effect of planted pleasure grounds than that of a wild forest. Lover had come to America too late to be regaled with the exuberant spirit of the being who once enlivened and made notable

its borders. The Kentuckian of early days was one of the most original of Western products, and some forty years ago, before imperious Time and settlement had rolled down his salient features, was made known to us most divertingly by the adventures of Colonel Crockett, and the capital acting of Mr. Hackett. The Gascon of America, the Munchausen of the West—his was a humour and eccentricity, a joviality and heartiness, which abundantly distinguished him from his European prototypes.

English and Virginian in his origin, but with a dash of Irish blood in his veins, he owed to Nature not a little of his magnifying tendency. In the romantic region to which he penetrated in the course of the last century, he saw everything about him on a grand and imposing scale, and gradually imbibed the expansive spirit which he poured out on all occasions. Size and force were his ideals, and the meanest circumstance in life was found worthy to be exalted to the height and volume of his hills and rivers. To use his own expressive rhapsody—"All creation biled down wouldn't make his old Kaintuck," and of course he was the especial product of what she was the peculiar essence. Still, with all his grandiosity, it must not be supposed that he was a mere braggart. There was much of deed as well as speech in him. He was a hunter who had passed his youth in encountering "Ingins, Bars, and Cattymounts," and given proof he could be as ready with his rifle as his tongue.

Moreover, he was a humorist. The facetiousness of the

Kentuckian was a very distinct quality from that of the New Englander. It was practical as well as notional—was a thing of adventure and achievement—had more of the man in it and his emotions than the fanciful product of the Yankee, the quaint extravagance of a sober intellect which at length became erratic. What a vocabulary was the Kentuckian's, that apt machinery of humour, which in its own peculiar form conveys so much of idea and spirit! How characteristic and suggestive was such a word as "cattawampussed"—being prostrated by misfortune, as if pulled down to the ground by a catamount; or, again, the term "absquatulated," meaning suddenly to abscond in the style of a delinquent squatter.

What force also in the description of a first rate fighting nature, "Clean meat-axe disposition;" or of an orator with fluency, "great water-power of talk." But a Kentuckian's happiest phraseology was in honour of himself. Every one has heard of the old announcement, "I'm half horse, half alligator, with the least taste of a panther in me, and a small sprinkling of the snapping turtle." As also his bewildering boast that "he could whip his weight in wild cats, and eat his length in sassages!" But in a summary of his achievements, which may not be so well known, there was great originality in the concluding feat he mentions—"I can jump higher, dive deeper, stay longer under, and come out *drier* than any man about the Alleghanies."

CHAPTER XIV.

1847, 1848.—Canada—Niagara—Difficulty of Describing it—The Sense it gives of the Infinite—Lover's Impressions on seeing it—His Sketches of the Falls—Difficulty of Drawing them—N. P. Willis's Illustration, and Byron's in "*Childe Harold*"—Our Age of Science—Niagara Weighed and Measured—An Index to Cosmogony—Our age of Sensation—Niagara Burlesqued and Utilized—The Boat and its Load of Victims—Sam Patch and his three Leaps, etc.—The Lake of a Thousand Islands—Its Beauty and Tranquillity—Its Romance of the Rebellion—The "Queen of the Thousand Islands," the St. Lawrence—Various Estimates of it—Its Human History—An Irish Account of the Battle of Prescott—Descent of the Rapids—Force and Danger of the Current—The Longue Sault and the Grand Rush—Advantages of Steam—Its old Conveyance, a Canadian Bateau, suggesting the Wild Horse of Mazeppa—Montreal and its Surroundings—Sail down the St. Lawrence—Its Animation—Varied Life upon its Banks—Its old French Settlements—Christianized Indians—Quebec—Its Towering Position—Attractions of its Neighbourhood—The Falls of Montmorenci—Indian Village of Loretto—Effect of Cold on the French Character—The Pent-up "Habitan" another Laplander—His Seigneur an Arrogant Recluse—The Down Easter and the "Habitan"—Lake George and Trenton Falls—A Second Visit to New England—The Fogs upon the Coast—Effect upon the Town of Portland; also upon its Seamen—Story of a Nantucket Skipper—New York in the Winter—New Year's Day—The Sleighing—The Horses' Funeral Peals—Social Characteristics—The Ferry Boat and its Initials—The Philosophy of Accidents—The Purity of English Speech—American Sympathy with Irish Suffering—The Excursion to the Great Lakes—The Route by the Juniata—Its Penalty—The Canal Boat—Detroit, on Lake St. Clair—Its Love of Music, and its Signboards—Lover's Discovery of his Great Mistake—No Scenery about the Lakes except round Sault De Marie—

Bad Weather and Discomforts—The Red Man of the Lakes—The Grounding of the Steamer—The Story of a Bouquet—Niagara Revisited—Departure for New York and England—The Character of the American Visit—*Lover's* highest Compliment.

AT length returning to New York by way of Harrisburgh and Baltimore, *Lover* rested a few weeks, to recover the effects of his southern ramble. It had repaid him so well financially, that he could afford this brief repose ; and if he found, when he was recruited, that the increasing heat put an end to all amusement on the seaboard, there was still a quarter that was practicable—the tourist's summer retreat, the Canadas. A visit to this region offered a double compensation. Great or small as might be its advantages to his pocket or reputation, it involved an enjoyment on the way that would serve to balance many losses ; it would enable him to see *Niagara*. This, the stranger's chief attraction, whatever his object in America, and which, if unwitnessed, leaves a void that is never likely to be filled up, *Lover* was as eager to see as most people ; and, accordingly, proceeding by the usual route of the Hudson and Lake Erie, through Utica, Rome, and other little classical anti-climaxes, he reached the sublime spectacle.

So much has been said of *Niagara*, and said so un-availingly, in order to convey to the mind of the stranger any adequate idea of it, that its present visitor, who felt its character quite as sensibly as any one, can scarcely be expected to be more successful in describing it. The

difficulty in dealing with this marvellous object lies in the feeling it creates of the infinite. Its truth contains a depth of emotion which no language can convey. You may enumerate its particulars, but it is not in your power to grasp its effect; you may show what strikes the senses, but not in the least what stirs the soul. Its foam, which you see rising many miles before you reach it, does not more vaguely suggest its grandeur than it truly represents the usual mistiness of its descriptions.

Lover, on writing to his daughters, is only able to tell them how its magnificence affected him. "When I came in sight of it," he says, "I lost all power of speech; I could scarcely refrain from tears; I threw off my hat in a spirit of reverential awe, and stretched out my hands towards this giant of the floods, as he plunged down the abyss, in his flowing robe of molten emeralds, and its fringe of pearls and diamonds;" and he concludes with wishing that his children had been with him to partake his feelings, and, with the assurance that in the deep sense which the scene produced of its Creator, he prayed for them devoutly. At the same time, whilst he acknowledged how little his pen could do it justice, he composed a lyric in its honour, which was afterwards sung with much acceptance, and he was also tempted to discover what his success would be with his pencil.

He made two sketches of the Falls—the Horse-shoe and the American—which, on a subsequent visit, he was able to work up into finished drawings; and one of which, I

believe, he reproduced in oil-colour. I have not met with these productions, but I have every confidence in their merit, despite the impossibility of conveying any notion of the subject as a whole, its vastness fairly defying the conditions of perspective—any conception of its breadth as much necessitating distance, as its depth, on the contrary, is only to be suggested by proximity. Again, painting must always labour under this great disadvantage, that, render the Falls as it may, it is denied two of the most necessary elements of their reality—their motion and their thunder.

One of their most interesting features Mr. N. P. Willis has happily illustrated in his work upon America*—their contrast just before and at the moment of the plunge,—their convulsive struggle at the rapids, as of a being madly endeavouring to escape a horrible doom, and their solemn calm in gliding over, as of a soul struck with despair. Of all writers, however, whose imagination has presented us with any idea of the terrific plunge itself—happy prerogative of genius—is the one who had never seen it. Byron's lines on the "Falls of Terni" are allowed, by every one who can compare them, to give the nearest conception of Niagara that poetry contains. Few have forgotten, in *Childe Harold*—

"The hell of waters, where they howl and hiss
In endless torture,"

* *American Scenery*, vol. i.

and the exquisite image of "the Iris," that "sits amidst the infernal surge," and resembles, beside its tumult,

"Love watching madness with unaltered mien."

But we live in an age of science. We live when mind proclaims its mastery over the wonders of creation, and puts aside emotion, however enkindling or overwhelming, in order to arrive at facts in physics or computations in geology. Niagara, with all its grandeur, has been measured, weighed, and calculated. It throws hourly over its ledge ninety million tons of water, and drains by its numerous feeders above 150,000 square miles of surface. The force with which it descends has been estimated in horse-power, and its evaporation duly condensed and given as fluid to the atmosphere. Still more, it has been converted into an elucidation of cosmogony. It flows over a bed of limestone that rests on a mass of shale, which, however slowly, is ever crumbling and undermining the rock above it. On the rate of this disintegration has been based a proof of the world's antiquity, as well as of the metamorphosis that awaits this part of the American continent. The gradual lowering of Niagara will remove the Falls nearer to Lake Erie, or possibly convert that inland sea into a gigantic course of rapids, which will present a grander spectacle than even the one they have displaced.

All these estimates, if merely guesses, have a massiveness and dignity that are not at all disrespectful to the subject of their figures;—but we live also, it must be remembered, in an era of sensation, which sees no necessity

for reverence in the survey of majestic objects. Burlesque, which has not shrunk from dishonouring Shakspeare in the drama, has not hesitated in Nature to offer insults to Niagara. From time to time this august marvel has been converted into a show spot, simply to display the tricks of mountebanks, or fill the pockets of vulgar speculators. Some thirty years ago a vessel was freighted with domestic animals and the contents of a menagerie, and duly advertised to be launched over the Falls on a certain day. Of course a multitude assembled ; but the boat, pushed into the stream with its wondering victims on its deck, stuck fast on a rock of the rapids,—the bears and monkeys taking to the rigging, and grinning, as it were derisively, at the disappointed public. At length the plunge was made, and there was only one survivor of the cruelty—an unhappy bewildered goose, which was picked up with a broken wing, and afterwards shown about the country, with much profit, as a curiosity.

A few years subsequently, Sam Patch converted this temple of sublime emotion into the arena of an acrobat, attracting thousands to see him leap into the abyss from the Table Rock. Twice he arose from its depths in safety, but the third time, I believe, he was not quite so fortunate as the goose that had gone before him. Last, not least, comes Monsieur Blondin, who crosses the cataract on a rope, and even enlarges his audacity by wheeling some one before him on a barrow ; and it is scarcely inhuman to think that if, in this excitement of a circus, Monsieur

Blondin and his companion had stuck fast when half across, and been compelled to follow the direction of Sam Patch and the model goose, the great sensation of the day would have had a fitting termination.

At Toronto and at Kingston, Lover recommenced his labours, and was able to refresh his British feeling in meeting with many from the mother country, who could talk to him of home, society, and literature, as well as enjoy his Entertainment. Here embarking in the little steamer, which, with a view to passing the rapids, had displaced the old "bateau," he entered the St. Lawrence—or the "Cataraqui," as the Indians call it—through that expanse of picturesqueness, the "Lake of a thousand Islands." The Ontario has certainly one great distinction from its sister waters—sublimity and beauty keep watch over its portals. Niagara opens the one in all its thunder and its glory; and the lake I have named closes the other in entire loveliness and peace. There are numerous members of its group which might almost share its special attribute, Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire and Lake Georgian more particularly, but none of them that can approach it in its general attraction.

Surveyed on a summer's day, under the clear heavens of the West, its islands look like a mass of emeralds set in rims of sparkling silver. They break the current of the St. Lawrence as it commences at this point, so that the water that surrounds them is always clear and placid, and when their green surfaces are fanned by the delightful

breeze of the Ontario, they present to many a traveller's fancy the conception of a cluster of little Edens. Lover was particularly charmed with them, and says, in a letter to his daughters, "They are quite lovely in the grouping of their rocks, and foliage, and varied form, and would seem the work and haunt of fairies; whilst the mighty rapids that lie beyond them, tumultuous as a sea, raging, boiling, and threatening destruction to the boat that dares attempt them, one would think the work of Titans."

There is no doubt that this striking contrast is a great source of their enchantment—their calmness and security on the very verge of the whirl of waters—their place, removed from and yet beside a never-resting and convulsive struggle; and a little history too was connected with them which did not render them less interesting. During the then recent Canadian rebellion, an insurgent was hidden away in one of their recesses by his daughter, a young and tender girl, who at some peril to herself, rowed out nightly to his asylum, carrying him food, and news, and sympathy. For this devotion she won the title of the "Queen of the thousand Islands," and became an object, as may be supposed, of much admiration and attention,—her popularity being enhanced by considerable personal attractions, which procured her, from time to time, many good offers of marriage. Either, however, that she feared there was less peace in the track of matrimony than in that of her fairy islands, or that she met with no one who could tempt her to partake its navigation, she remained

single all her days, and with but one affection, as it seemed—her love for the retreat where she had hidden away her father.

The St. Lawrence has given rise to some variety of estimate. Whilst by certain writers it has been regarded as a mere spout to the great lakes, a conduit pipe to carry their enormous contents into the Atlantic,—by others it has been elevated into a twinship with the Mississippi, the fellow channel that, in another direction, drains the vast water-shed of the North. Dr. Dwight, the American economist, has traced upwardly its course through the chain of the inland seas, in the same manner as the Rhine has been followed through Lake Constance, and the Rhone through that of Geneva. With him it is not the offspring, but one of the sources of the Ontario; and in this light, its life—as its progress may be called—has a diversity that is really very human and attractive.

It flows peacefully enough in youth, through the broad Superior and Huron—encounters its first difficulty in piercing the rushes of Lake St. Clair—makes its great plunge in life from the ledge of the Niagara—then combats many obstacles in its descent to Montreal, and at length subsides, as it ought to do, into a becoming calm and dignity, ere, like higher and happier things, it passes away into the unbounded. Lover was struck with the peculiarly blue tint of its water, deepening at times almost to blackness—as if, at its outset, it claimed affinity with the great ocean to which it hurried—and with the pleasantness

of its banks, which, in addition, had become interesting through many incidents of the Rebellion. Opposite Prescott a settler, who happened also to be his countryman, was anxious to impress him with the terrors of a fight which had occurred there. "Look, sir," he exclaimed, "there you will see all the houses that were knocked down by the cannon, standing as well as they can, and with their roofs blown clean off av 'em."

About the middle of the day he commenced what is unquestionably one of the most exciting and novel instances of travelling in America—the descent of the rapids. Entering them by those called "Le Galop"—pronounced in the Canadian patois, "Galonge"—the strength and tumult of the current was attested by their requiring three men at the helm of the vessel. Here the woods are very beautiful, and the whole prospect is picturesque, but the speed and power of the water have a fascination which allows the eye rarely to escape to other objects. At "Rapid Flats" the stream has all the appearance and something of the hazard of a chopping sea, and at "Longue Sault,"—pronounced "Long Sow" (though in its restlessness and speed suggesting anything but the movements of that sedate and cautious animal),—the river divides into two channels, down the wider of which the boat plunges for "the grand rush," as it is called—a passage of three miles, the most dangerous if also the most exciting of the voyage, requiring seven men to effect it safely, three at the prow and four at the helm.

Reaching at length Lake St. Francis, the tide subsides into a deep calm, as though worn out by its convulsions, and there the passenger is only too thankful to rest in quiet for the night; but directly afterwards it reanimates in the shape of two other rapids, the Cedars and the Cascades, which are among the most formidable of the group; until at last, the hurrying Ottawa pouring its tribute into the St. Lawrence, as if in sympathy with its trials, the landing-place is reached, and a coach conveys you to Montreal. This descent of what is almost a continuous incline of nearly a hundred miles in length, and more than a hundred feet in depth, is probably unique in the whole world, and was a far more perilous matter when the voyage was made, as it was at first, in a long flat-bottomed boat, which was managed only by oars and poles.

The strength and swiftness of the current, and the narrowness of the channels between the rocks, make the safety of the vessel depend entirely on its steering, and it scarcely need be said that the power which steam supplies, both to support the wheel and control a current, render its advantages incalculable. My own impression of the transit, which I made in boyhood with my father, I can compare to nothing but what I have gained since from the imagination of a great poet—the well-known ride of Mazeppa. In like manner I seemed committed to the back of a wild horse, called a Canadian bateau, which, as if excited by a panic, went plunging, flying, and straining amidst the rock and whirlpool of a wilderness, challenging

destruction every instant, and appearing to escape it only by miracle.

This visit to the Canadas, though very brief, was very agreeable. The country, which is usually subjected to five months of positive winter, was now seen under its best aspect, and Montreal rarely fails to prepossess the traveller with its pleasant position on the slope of a hill that is well wooded to its brow, and beside a noble breadth of river, though one that is broken by a rapid. Many of its old buildings at this period retained the stamp of their remote origin, which was nearly two centuries before; and in one respect, at least, they had all a great distinction from other structures in America—their roofs were sheeted with tin, as a protection against fire—slates, except by shipment, being unattainable in that vicinity; and the result was that, whenever touched by the rays of the rising or setting sun, the city at a distance broke into the blaze of a vast star.

The sail down the St. Lawrence sustained the city's good impression. The river, enlivened by its extensive commerce, European and American, and the light Canadian rafts, that, as they glided down its bosom, hoisted their gay streamers on tall poles, also combined some lovely scenery with the social interest of the varying life, settled and savage, on its borders. Here again, as in Louisiana, were to be seen the old French settlements, which still exhibited the manners, arts, and looks of their foundation, and retained, in addition, their seignorial laws

and privileges (the *coutumes de Paris*), which had been abolished in the South; and here also were to be seen villages, such as that of Caughnewaga, in which the experiment had partially succeeded of reclaiming the Red man to Christianity. This laudable object—which England had so honourably attempted in her colonies, by the establishment of William and Mary College—was only if but slightly accomplished by Roman Catholicism, whose imposing and sensuous ritual was more adapted to attract the Indian, than the bald simplicities of Protestantism.

Quebec strikingly completed the pleasant aspects of the passage by its picturesque and towering position on the sheer and lofty cliffs of the river—a mountain citadel, that, fitly planted amidst precipice and battlement, claims the submission of half a continent to the lordly waving of the British flag. Nor need I enlarge on the attractions that were afforded by its neighbourhood, the noble Falls of Montmorenci, higher than those of the Niagara, and only wanting greater volume to be the second wonder of its class; and those again of the “Chaudière,” quite as beautiful, if less impressive—of both of which, as well as of Quebec, our traveller made some clever sketches. A greater interest attached to his visit to the Indian village of Loretta, where another instance was exhibited of the Red man being reclaimed, as it was said, to civilization. This was scarcely, however, the fact, since most of the Indians here were “half breeds,” who spoke a French patois, and whom, if rendered peaceful and comparatively sober,

culture had failed to inspire with either skill or love of labour.

Here also was to be observed how notably the climate had told on the French character. It may be said that, as a rule, cold is ruin to a Frenchman. He belongs to air and sunshine as much as the swallow and the butterfly, and to pen him up indoors is not merely to imprison him, but to extinguish his vivacity. The Canadian peasants, who are compelled to crouch for months together round their miserable cabin stoves, imbibing the fumes of charcoal in lieu of healthful oxygen, wither into beings little different in spirit or look from Fins and Laplanders; whilst their Seigneurs, proud and prejudiced, who prolonged in their secluded settlements so much of the spirit of old France, coldly repelled, in the days I speak of, all advances of English society, and reserved their entire activity for factious resistance in the Législature.

They had, however, the excuse that English society in those times consisted chiefly of the military—an abiding reminder to the French of their national defeat, and that the former probably were often a little too sensible of their position, and not disposed to make the concessions that would have invited a response. At the same time, the monotony of a military existence in the Canadas made a visit such as Lover's a most agreeable relief—inferior concerts and theatricals being, in those days, the sole excitements of that isolated region. Other visitors, it is true, lightened its weariness occasionally—some New

Englishers, for instance, who came to ascertain whether they could inoculate the natives with a little of their own progressive spirit. The dull "Habitan," however, turned a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer, and the genius of "Down East" mostly returned home as he came, with a contempt for the poor Canadian that was only to be appeased by comparing him to the well-known dog of Alabama, who could not be killed by "fever and agy" because he was too lazy to shake.

Lover, returning to New York by Lake Champlain and Lake George—the latter, perhaps, the loveliest of all minute waters in existence—and with a brief glance at Trenton Falls, whose gloomy grandeur he considered worthy of the pencil of a Poussin, found the autumn setting in, and thought the best way of employing it was in another visit to New England. All that was notable about this trip was that his audiences exhibited a slight increase of warmth, and that it added something to his knowledge of the marine life of the country. The fogs that are so dangerous off the coast of Newfoundland, and which were so nearly causing the wreck of the steamer he was on board of, are quite as well known, in autumn, on the shores of the eastern States, and lead as frequently to scenes of singularity and peril.

A coasting vessel sailing one hour in perfect security and clearness, is involved the next in a mist which imprisons it as completely as if it had been built round by a wall, compelling it to take soundings, send up rockets,

and blow fog-horns continually, as the only way to escape collisions. And the land is as much exposed to these surprises as the water. Portland, distinguished by its noble harbour, is, by means of this phenomenon, favoured at certain seasons with a sort of scenic entertainment. The fog descends over the place in the impervious fashion of a curtain,—then lifts and shows the prospect, either under clouds or brilliant sunshine—then sinks and lifts again in order to present a different picture.

Such a feature of the coast breeds great caution in its navigators, and stimulates their senses into extraordinary acuteness. Not only their sight and hearing, but even their smelling is exceptional. They are credited with the power of being able to sniff the land when some distance out at sea. An old skipper of Nantucket was said to possess this gift to such an extent that, by a mere smell of the lead after soundings had been taken, he could discover his boat's position. Sending for that instrument one night when he was too lazy to leave his berth, some one anxious to test his faculty inserted the end of it in a flower-pot containing a small rose tree. The skipper sniffed it in the dark, and then, with a ringing oath, exclaimed, "Why, Nantucket must have sunk, and we are over Mother Brown's garden!"

Again returning to New York, Lover rested there for the winter, fancying he was now sufficiently indurated to endure its rigorous season, giving his Entertainment occasionally, and filling up his leisure with working at his

songs and sketches. New Year's day there, which seems a copy of the *Jour de l'An* of Paris, was passed in a series of visits from one house to another, pleasantly exchanging drinks and courtesies, and winding up with a carouse which threw a pretty bold defiance in the teeth of their arctic enemy. Snow was hard upon the ground, and sleighing—one of America's chief enjoyments—was at its height. What with the crowd and speed of the vehicles, and the lively jangle of their bells, the Broadway of New York was a scene of especial animation.

The only drawback to its agreeableness was the cruelty too often caused by the excitement of rival driving. Horses were maimed or killed continually, and left dead or dying in the snow, whilst the sleighers (or, rather, slayers) hurried onward with increased ardour. Accordingly, my friend could not help thinking, as he listened to the bells of the unhappy animals, that they were ringing by anticipation the funeral peals of their own demise. Little social characteristics were also frequently observable. One of the ferry boats at New York, that came and went with tremendous speed, had only two letters on her paddle-box—H. N.—as if she had no time to give her name in full, and was forced to put up with initials.

You met with philosophers who were of opinion that the most disastrous railway accidents were indispensable to science. "If 'twarn't for accidents," remarked some one after a calamitous explosion, "how on airth should we find

out that our machinery wants improving?" You met, again, with philologers who contended that the English tongue, like a reformed emigrant, was only to be found pure in America. Lover was told by one of his auditors, "I dar say I should like your stories, if I could understand the brogue;" and on the former replying that every people must have its accent, as well as other specialities, and for that reason he should be unqualified to tell a Yankee story—"I don't see that," rejoined his friend, "I guess your English is very good."

All this, however, was on the surface, the merest specks upon the skin, beneath which, during the previous summer, the Americans had shown the beating of a warm and worthy heart. The Irish famine had called forth the deepest expressions of their sympathy, and in noble evidence of it they had dismantled one of their frigates of its armament, and, freighting it with provisions, had sent it over to the sufferers. This touching instance of the conversion of an engine of destruction into a means of friendliness and succour,—of an implement of barbarity into a vehicle of Christian kindness, was not likely to be lost on Lover, whether as Irishman or poet, and he not only warmly acknowledged it on many occasions, public and private, but he wrote a song in its honour, which thenceforward formed a prominent and attractive feature of his programme.

With the spring of 1848 came the period of his leave-taking. He was now in the second year of his visit, and

had not only made the tour of nearly every part of the Union—forming many pleasant friendships, and gaining the knowledge of a wonderful country, as well as of an extraordinary people—but he had been enabled to accomplish the chief object of his coming, in his satisfactory profits. There was only one excursion wanting in order to complete his Western experience, which, if neglected, he thought might cost him not only the loss of some enjoyment, but many gains to his portfolio—the tour of the Great Lakes. Since he had abandoned the idea of a book, save in the lighter and gay^{er} form of external and descriptive sketches, he had turned all the more intently to the illustration of American scenery, his pencil, as I have shown, constantly supplementing his duties at most of the points of town or country which merited transcription.

Through a false impression, which I cannot account for, he had been led to regard the Lakes as the peculiar region of the draughtsman, and one, moreover, that had the value of being comparatively unknown—previous artists having either underrated their attractions, or been content to deal with those that were more accessible and popular. He accordingly indulged the hope—only to be dissipated by the endeavour—of being able to carry to England what would prove to be a new and striking aspect of the West. Bidding farewell, then, to New York in an Entertainment that he gave for the benefit of the “British Emigration Society,” and which he had the gratification of seeing overwhelmingly attended, he paid final visits to Philadelphia,

Baltimore, and Washington, at the latter of which he had the honour of being presented to President Polk, whilst at the first he witnessed the excitement of a "Great National Whig Convention."

He then started for the Lakes, *via* Pittsburgh and Detroit, through a region whose exceeding loveliness has scarcely a compeer on the continent—that of the Juniata and Susquehanna—though a loveliness of whose enjoyment he little anticipated the cost. Between Harrisburgh and Pittsburgh the journey was performed in a canal boat, which in summer was usually crowded with some of the roughest specimens possible of American society; and as the transit occupied three days, and the passengers had to sleep on board,—the danger of the night air driving every one below,—of course the cabin, under such circumstances, was more to be dreaded than the climate. Lover, it is probable, was considerably the greatest sufferer on this occasion—entrapped into this mode of transit by his desire to see the country, and kept vibrating, throughout the sail, between the enchantments of the day and the tortures of the night. At Pittsburgh, however, he was regaled with the odorous breezes and the superb prospect from its heights, after which, by rail and steamer, he reached Cleveland on Lake Erie, and Detroit on Lake St. Clair.

This city—which was originally one of the line of military posts that the French had stretched across the West, in order to connect Canada with Louisiana—if it had fewer traces of its settlement than either New Orleans

or Montreal, could boast of the most musical people Lover had met with in the "States," and the most gigantic system of signboards he had ever seen or heard of. Here he had intended to commence his sketching, but was destined to be reminded of the old French proverb, "*L'homme propose*,"—his project being not only baffled by a state of weather that utterly precluded any attempt to land or linger—continuous tempest, rain, and fog setting in with transient intervals, from the time of his departure to his return—but all these annoyances being aggravated by the discovery of his great mistake.

The shore of the Great Lakes, circling all round from Erie to Superior, is for the most part flat and barren, without mountain, cliff, or forest to give any framework to their grandeur—the only exception being Lake Georgian, and the neighbourhood of the Sault de St. Marie, where are to be found natural features of great impressiveness and beauty; and, fortunately, as the weather brightened on his return in this direction, he was able to sketch some of their outlines with tolerable clearness and precision. I can have no occasion, then, to dwell on the dismal details of this excursion, in small inconvenient vessels, which, however good as lake-boats, had no arrangements for their crowd of passengers, and which went struggling through gale and rain out of the reedy waters of the St. Clair into the broad expanse of the Huron, down the Michigan to Chicago, and back to the rapids of St. Marie,—thence to enter and cross the Superior to Copper Harbour, on its

western bank, and from that limit to wend homewards in the same weather, and by the same track, till all this long train of discomforts was at last concluded at Niagara.

All that was felt throughout this desolate and stormy region of inland seas, with their sandy and rocky shores stretching for miles without a tree, and, in their northern and vastest portion, for hundreds of miles without a harbour, was that a law of pitiless barrenness seemed to stamp itself on everything, even on the highest of its productions, aboriginal man himself. Here, for the first time, Lover encountered a true specimen of the Red man, restored—as it was said by a covert sarcasm—to civilization. Not a mere half-breed, as in Canada—a lower form of withered Frenchman, whose squaw, his domestic animal, did all his work whilst he smoked or slept—he was a genuine pure blood of the North, whose tribe was in alliance with the Government, and who came down yearly to the Huron, to receive his “bounty,” and do some fishing. It is true this man was no longer savage. He had ceased to butcher women and children, to scalp the enemy he killed, or to burn the one he captured; but, beyond this, he was as exempt as ever from any influence of progress. He was a mere quiescent animal, lazy, inexpert, and sensual. Christianity had as little inspired him with any due sense of his Maker, as society had served to place him in any true relation to his fellow-men. He remained, in fact, the same phenomenon which he had been a century and a half before, when it was first attempted to reclaim him. He had come in

contact with civilization merely to be conquered by its force and emasculated by its vices.

Dreary, however, as was this voyage, it was not without its occasional offsets. On Lake Superior, for instance, he met with rather an enlivening incident. His boat, called the "Independence," got aground when coming to a jetty, and after all endeavours to release her had proved ineffectual for the evening, the captain and passengers turned into the cabin to sustain their misfortune with a little jollity. Lover was called upon for a song, and immediately struck up—

"Here we lay, all the day,
In the Bay of Biscay, oh!"

which was received with great enthusiasm; and he at length proposed a toast—"Independence all the world over—except upon a sand-bank."

Our old friend the negro also cropped up with some felicity. The ladies at Milwaukie had been favoured with an "Irish evening," and as a mark of their satisfaction, presented their Entertainer with a superb bouquet, which, on entering the boat for Mackinaw, he desired the steward to put in water. On inquiring for it afterwards, the negro to whom it had been entrusted said he "Knowed nuffing about a book," as Lover's sound of the word suggested; and was not more enlightened when the term "Bookay" deepened into "Bowkay," at the prompting of one of the sailors. At length an intelligent passenger exclaimed, "Why, the gentleman means a bucket;" upon which

Cæsar's visage brightened—a clue was at last supplied him. He had immersed the flowers in a pail of water—just as thoroughly as he would have done a cabbage, and drawing them forth from its fatal depths with a marked air of triumph, he gave them a whisk as he exclaimed, “Dere, sar, dat's nice and fresh, I tink!”

Lover stayed a fortnight at Niagara, finishing his drawings, visiting the whirlpool, and enjoying the last sensation of its wonderful locality—a bath at the Bridge House, during which he had the curious feeling of hearing, as he lay in the water, the rapids rushing by him, and probably wondering how he should feel if he himself were rushing with them. Thence, hurrying on to New York in order to catch the departing steamer, he shook hands with all his friends there, and embarked forthwith for home.

Such, in all its pleasantest features, was his visit to America. Though it was tolerably laborious and sufficiently trying to his health, there can be no doubt that on the whole it was one of the most agreeable portions of his life. During its course he had surveyed some of the grandest scenery in the world; he had met with friends in all directions, and improved his finances as well as his fame. Could he have written the book he intended, he would have done the fullest justice to the cordiality he had met with, and to the great intelligence, worth, and kindness he had everywhere observed. He would also have acknowledged that, were happiness identical with a gratified

self-esteem, he had had his share of it in America. In all directions he had encountered people who had heard his songs and read his stories. The latter were an introduction to him—alike among the pine barrens of Florida, and on the lonely shore of Michigan. An inn-keeper at Sault St. Marie favoured him with a criticism on Barney O'Reirdon; and the captain of a New York steamboat esteemed Rory O'More so highly as to decline taking his fare. Perhaps, however, the highest compliment he received—as it was also the most original—was that of a New England fellow-traveller, who wished him to transfer his home to America, and among other inducements said, “Sir, you are admired and respected in this country, and you may rely on it, if you die here, we should give you a beautiful monument.”

CHAPTER XV.

1848—1868.—England—Lover's new Entertainment—Death of his elder Daughter—His second Marriage—Cessation of his Entertainments, and Settlement near London—His new and leading Occupation, Landscape Painting in Oil—Its Difficulties as compared with Water Colour—His greater Mistake in not adopting Figure Painting—His other Occupations, Entertainments for Vocalists and Musical Dramas—The *Sentinel of the Alma* and *Macarthy More*—Libretti of Operas for Balfe—Constituents of a Libretto Writer—The Dramatic Element his greatest—Opera History an Illustration—The Classic and Romantic Eras—Eugène Scribe the greatest Librettist—Lover's last Dramatic Effort—The Queen's Bounty.—1856. Lover as Editor and Critic—The *Lyrics of Ireland*.—1858. Wanting in the Songs of Moore: Additions from Swift, Goldsmith, and Sheridan—What constitutes an Irish Lyric, Authorship or Nationality?—Reasons in favour of the Latter—Merits of Lover's Additions and of his Labours as an Editor—Two cases of Disputed Authorship, *Savourneen Deelish* and *The Exile of Erin*—Lady Morgan the Author of the former, and the Claim of G. N. Reynolds in respect to the latter.—1859. The Burns Festival—Its general Celebration—Prize Poem proposed by the Crystal Palace Company—Lover's Satire, *Rival Rhymes*, in the manner of the *Rejected Addresses*—Advantages possessed by the Writers of the latter—Lover's Mistakes in his Title and Pseudonyme—Merits of his Satires—Imitation of Campbell; also of Father Prout—Travesties of Milton, Longfellow, and Macaulay—Merit also of the Prose Pieces—Tupper, Thackeray, and Brougham.—1859. Rise of the Volunteer Movement—Lover a Volunteer—Labours on Finance Committee and at Drill—His Service to the Movement by his Songs—His Country Life and Established Health—His Surrender of London Society.—1864. The sudden Failure of his Health—Necessity for a milder Climate—Trial of the Isle of Wight and Jersey—Lover's closing Days—His Suffering and Regrets—His Sustainment under his Affliction—His Patience, Cheerful-

ness, and Pleasantry—His renewed Labours and occasional Enjoyments—His Amiability and extraordinary Strength.—1868. His last Anniversaries of Marriage-day and Birthday—His last Illness and Death—His Burial at Kensal Green—The Tablet to his Memory put up in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

ON his return to England Lover felt that he was fairly entitled to a holiday. Two years' absence from children and friends warranted rest and relaxation, during which he could leisurely think over and prepare his plans for the future. With the opening of the ensuing year, however, this repose was at an end; his strength was renewed, his plans were made, and he resumed his duties with an Entertainment that combined the attraction of old favourites with much that was novel and diverting in his American experience. This fresh venture, of course, adhered to the class of its predecessors; it was nothing dramatic or mimetic, nothing illustrated by pictures or assisted by change of dress, but simply a mirthful, rambling medium of anecdote and commentary which chiefly served as an introduction to his Transatlantic songs.

Added to this, there was some description of Irish life in America—a theme that was not only new, but full of oddity and flavour—so that his budget was tolerably stocked for another circuit of the three kingdoms, which he continued to keep up for something over a couple of years, reviving old impressions, and again securing good results, when very unexpectedly and painfully his exertions were brought to a close. His younger daughter had lately married, and shortly afterwards her sister, a very interest-

ing girl, was snatched from him by consumption in her one-and-twentieth year. Endowed with many endearing qualities both of mind and disposition, she was all that remained to him of the home he had possessed on leaving England, and her loss was one of the severest and most unnerving trials of his life. It was a blow so overwhelming as to deprive him for a time of all capacity for work, and when he rallied, leave him no spirit to enliven the public any longer.

I shall not stop to consider what this result cost him financially—this resigning a pursuit which had probably grown more lucrative as it was becoming less laborious; his peace and health, of course, were the first consideration, and it was certainly very fortunate that he was able to contract a second marriage at the opening of the ensuing year, which supplied him with all the sympathy and sustainment he required. In January, 1852, he was united to Miss Mary Wandby, the daughter of William Wandby, Esq., of Coldham Hall, Cambridgeshire, a lady whose taste and refinement were as capable of estimating his talents as her other and higher qualities could ensure his happiness generally.

Thus, after some seven years' discharge of the pleasant tasks of an executant, Lover returned to private life, and resumed his old employments. His time hereafter, if less active and less varied than it had been, was certainly not less happy, and scarcely less productive; and his mind, whilst it was capable of turning in all its past directions,

showed it still preserved the vigour to unfold itself in fresh ones. Fixing his residence near London, his first effort, however, was not in a new path, but an old one. Of all his numerous endowments, his favourite, as I have shown, was painting—the earliest to be developed, the most continuous to be exerted, and not the less beloved because it had brought him least celebrity. Compelled to abandon it in one form, he had come back to it in another, and now the sketches he had brought home with him he resolved on working up into large and finished pictures.

Meanwhile, however, there had occurred a certain growth in his ideas. He had commenced life as a marine painter. Sea and sky were his earliest province, with their more brilliant quality of light and less contrasted breadths of surface; and on his resigning this field for miniature, the intenser shadows, bolder changes, and greater variety of form in landscape, much and constantly as he observed them, eluded his grasp for many years. Patient study, however, of their character, and probably also some experiment, not only inspired him with the ambition to attempt this higher field; but, on his visit to America, led to the belief that he had penetrated to a deeper knowledge of its principles.

Writing to his daughters on the occasion of sending them home some tinted sketches, he says, “My long journeyings in the West, with nothing to do but look at nature, have led me to reduce to principles certain effects in landscape painting, which I feel will enable me to

produce pictures of no mean pretensions." Now, whatever were the discoveries which urged him into this new region of art, it was certainly most unfortunate that he should also have decided on adopting a new vehicle. He resolved to abandon water-colour, and paint henceforth in oil. Of course, he may have found that his views would be more promoted by the greater richness and depth of the one, than by the brilliancy and delicacy attainable in the other; but he forgot that his new material involved a difficulty of handling, that ordinarily requires a long apprenticeship to master. The fluid medium and yielding pigments which enable the water-colourist to catch Nature, as it were, at a sitting, and confine her truth and spirit within a certain amount of finish, have little parallel in oil, whose stubborn mixtures and denser substances, as well as successive coats of colour, require indefinite refining touches to subdue to a just expression.

Such was his ardour, however, that he boldly encountered this ordeal, and devoted several years to the production of oil-paintings—among which were Sault St. Marie and Lake Georgian in America, Mont Orgueil on the Island of Jersey, and Sandfort Castle on the coast of Dorsetshire. All of these pictures, if not pre-eminent, had quite sufficient merit to show the position he might have reached had he been content with the facilities and character of his old vehicle, and not wasted time and power over the obstructions of a new one, which up to the last moment denied him his true measure of success.

As late as 1860 he was still contending with, and complaining of, the difficulties of his process, and, whilst hoping that he might yet become distinguished in landscape painting, confessing that at his age such a result was very doubtful. And, accordingly, regarding these pictures as mere tentative endeavours, he rarely gave them any publicity by sending them to leading exhibitions, but mostly despatched them to the country, or disposed of them in private.

After all, however, there was more than this great mistake on the part of Lover; there was quite as great a puzzle. How was it, it may be asked, that nature should have all this sudden and absorbing charm for the mind of one who, throughout life, had only been attracted by humanity? How did he see so much in landscape and nothing at all in figure-painting—the especial field for which his experience and social sympathy befitted him? His numerous etchings sufficiently attested that he could draw the human form with fidelity and spirit, as well as infuse it with a vast amount of character and humour. Why was not such a power developed, and especially when it had the advantage of lying in a direction that up to that time was still untrodden? The school of Wilkie, Webster, and Leslie had not been applied to rural Celticism. The Irish peasant upon canvas was, as yet, a stranger to English eyes. How odd, then, that Lover had no ambition to become the painter—as he was already the poet—of his rustic countrymen, and so,

in a double manner, be enabled to render his reputation national.

Such, then, was his new outset on his return to private life. But though his pencil was his principal, it was not his only, occupation—work, with him, was a noun of multitude, and still signified variety. Songs he continued to write and compose up to the last year of his existence, and though he turned to no account the sketches contained in his American journals, he contributed amusing papers to some of the London periodicals. He also commenced—and very effectively—furnishing others with the Entertainments that he had ceased to give himself. He prepared an olio of sketch and song for the vocalist, Mr. Hime, of which he also supplied the music; and a similar vehicle for Miss Williams, both of which were quite successful.

He also returned for a time to the drama. He wrote a little musical piece for the Haymarket, called *The Sentinel of the Alma*—the hero of which, an Irish soldier, was admirably sustained by Mr. Hudson, the only true successor of Power; and another for the Lyceum, entitled *Macarthy More*, its leading character being embodied by Mr. John Drew—the most natural actor of an Irish peasant, of the Handy Andy stamp, that in my time has been seen. He entered another field of the drama for which he was especially adapted—he wrote the libretti of a couple of operas for his friend and countryman, Michael Balfe, which, either owing to the mass of his engagements or the

state of the London theatres, that jocund son of Apollo was never able to compose.

Since the failure of the enterprise of Miss Pyne and Mr. Harrison, a national English opera seems to have become so very hopeless, that it is idle to regret the scarcity of any one of its constituents. We want composers in the first place, and singers and actors in the second, before we need think of the authors who must be associated with their labours. At the same time it is but right that we should correctly estimate the latter. A superior libretto writer almost amounts to a phenomenon: he unites a threefold capacity—that of poet, musician, and dramatist. Not only must he be able to write verse passionate and fanciful, and also verse of a various metre that shall give the music the freest play; but, in addition, he must construct a story which shall engage the sympathies and expectation, and so enable words and music to make their requisite impression.

Of this triad of important faculties I need not add that the latter is the highest. I have already said that melody and subject are the twin essentials of an opera, but without an interesting drama, even music, the most melodious, would have but slight chance of surviving. An opera is, after all, but the musical expansion of a play—the peculiar form in which the latter obtains a fuller scope for passion; wanting which basis, music sinks into mere fancifulness or science, that, having no hold on human sympathy, has no power of endurance. It is a rich cargo in a fragile vessel,

only sent to sea to founder. If it be the fact, then, as I have already stated, that out of some thousands of operas written since the beginning of the past century, only some hundred have survived, and that their writing has in each case been distinguished by their melody, not less will it be found that all the most eminent, as well as the most popular, have been based on effective dramas, most of which could be performed without a note of music to sustain them. How many noble and affecting pieces—airs replete with feeling and character, half stifled, though they were, with ornamentation and bravura—must have perished in these old productions, simply for want of dramatic vehicles !

At the same time it is nothing strange. Opera originating in what was merely a musical form of the Greek tragedy—a conversion of that which was the latter's accompaniment into its entire interpretation—the best of its early libretto writers, such as Apostolo Zeno and Metastasio, could not resist the attraction of classic and mythologic subjects, little as the latter appealed to the feelings, save in the notable exceptions of the *Iphigenia* and the *Medea*. It was their successors who wisely turned to the more emotional resources of the romantic play and fiction—*Romeo and Juliet*, *Don Juan*, *The Barber of Seville*, etc., until at length we come to Scribe, the great exemplar of his class, who, uniting all capacities, shows, in the highest of them especially, so much art, grace, and invention.

The best libretto-writers of England have been Mr. Planché and Mr. Rophino Lacy, both of whom, however, won their ground rather by adaptations than original subjects ; and I believe Lover would have formed a third, with more inventive power than either, had circumstances been as favourable to the proof of his ability. Connected with such ability was his last dramatic effort—another comic operetta, of which he wrote both words and music, but which has never been produced ; and it was about the time of this libretti-writing—1856—that he was compensated for its vexations by the gracious act of Her Majesty, who was pleased to bestow on him a pension “ in recognition of his various services to literature and art.”

Lover's next prominent effort was in an entirely new capacity—that of editor and critic. Books of English and Scottish songs had been published with much success, and it was proposed by their proprietor, Mr. Maxwell (in 1858), that Lover should complete the series by editing a book of Irish lyrics. There were many reasons to justify his selection for such an office. Since the death of Moore he had been acknowledged as the first of living Irish minstrels, and there were few men of his time who were better acquainted with his country's songs, or the national airs, comic or serious, to which they were united. Still, he had some reluctance in complying ; editorial duty was a task that he had never yet essayed, and, as he frankly confesses in his Journal, “ analytic writing was not at all his vein.” It needed the spur of his national sympathies to decide him

in the matter—the feeling that such a work would be a vindication of Irish genius, whatever might be objected to its mode of execution.

At the same time he was made aware of a great drawback to the attempt, that would necessarily impair its value, and possibly limit its success. Existing copyrights forbade him to make use of the “Irish Melodies.” A book of Irish songs which was deprived of those of Moore was certainly an instance of the play of Hamlet with the character of the Prince omitted. Lover felt the need so sensibly that, after remarking in his preface how much a Scotch collection would suffer if it wanted the songs of Burns, he says, with much felicity, that his own higher loss of Moore placed him in the predicament of the Greeks, who were compelled to fight without Achilles.

He felt that the only way to narrow the effect of such a deficiency was to make his volume more inclusive than any collection that had preceded it; balancing, if possible, its great omission with an extensive range of additions, that would furnish the native genius with a fuller and livelier reflection. Thus he was led to include in his list every Irishman of talent who was known to have written verse, gaining thereby undoubtedly some of the highest names of his country—such as Swift, Goldsmith, and Sheridan; but in so doing assuming a principle which, it is obvious, could only be exercised under a stringent limitation. Many of the contributions he introduces are poetic, but not lyrical. Swift’s epigrams on “Cudgelled Thomas,”

and "The Busts in Richmond Hermitage;" Goldsmith's epitaph on Parnell, and also on Edward Purdon; and Miss Edgeworth's lines on Petrarch's Inkstand, graceful and thoughtful though they be, scarcely belong to a book of songs.

This principle also raises the very interesting question—What constitutes an Irish lyric? Is it authorship or nationality? Is a song Irish because it possesses the characteristics of the national mind—the stronger emotion, wilder fancy, deeper pathos, richer humour, or all alternating in the fitfulness of an exquisite caprice; or is it such from mere paternity, its simple inditing by an Irish hand, though all its characteristics are indisputably English? *The Exile of Erin*, for instance, is rightly numbered with Hibernian verse, though written by a Scotchman, because it simulates so wonderfully the native patriotic feeling. The deep wailing of its pathos, and the touching way it interweaves its associations of home and country, stamp it with some of the most glowing and kindling marks of nationality; but Sheridan's charming song of *Had I a Heart for Falschood framed*, with its elegant antithesis, and its measured, calm expression, has not a national trait about it—it is purely and strikingly English,—verse that derives all its emotion from its inimitable melody.

Compare again two such songs as Cherry's minutely-touched *Tom Moody*, and that true burst of Celtic spirit, the uproarious *Kilruddery Hunt*, and, though both are

from the hands of natives, the one is as obviously Irish as the other is sheer Saxon. Nationality, therefore, is not a quality dependent on external traits or allusions—is nothing necessarily identical with even Irish events or scenery ; it is essentially a matter of feeling, or otherwise such favourites as *Love's Young Dream*, *The Minstrel Boy*, or *The Last Rose of Summer*, might be fairly denied their country, though overflowing with a tenderness that is proper to no other. This test of an Irish lyric is just as necessary to discriminate its comic effusions as its serious. By no other means can the few productions that, anterior to the time of Lover, paint the Irish peasant as he is, be extracted from those masses of dull absurdity and coarseness, the "Shamrocks" and "Harps of Erin," which encrust unhappy Pat with their pigs, potatoes, and shille-laghs, and their eternal emphasis of whacks.

If, then, under the necessity of a wide inclusion in order to repair a great deficiency, Lover has made additions to his collection which are scarcely within its limits, he has balanced them by others that admit of no dispute whatever, and which bestow upon his book a most agreeable distinction. He has done justice, in the first place, to the genius of Gerald Griffin in the exquisite purity and tenderness of his *Eileen Aroon* and *Gilly Machree*—to the rugged fervour of John Banim, in his *Soggarth Aroon* and his *Aileen*—to the passion and grace of Thomas Davis, in his *Annie Dear* and *Flower of Finæ*—to the mournful ardour of J. Calanan, in his grand *Farewell to*

Gouganne Barra—to the simple pathos of Lady Dufferin, in her touching *Emigrant's Lament*—and last, not least, to the fervid spirit and affluent fancy of Dr. Ferguson, whose *Forging of the Anchor* he rightly ranks among the noblest of modern specimens of ballad.

But he has gone farther afield than this. He has given us additions which, if less known, are scarcely less delightful, and varied their seriousness with gaieties that serve to sharpen their enjoyment. The songs from Lever, for instance, with their play of humour and burst of spirits that bring back all the headlong animation of his early stories, are a notable accession. The vigorous strains of Mrs. Downing, in her *Grave of Mac Caura* especially,—Dr. Waller's song of *The Spinning-wheel*, and not less his *Dance light, Love*, two of the most graphic and buoyant pictures that Irish minstrelsy has given us,—Edward Walsh's *Margread in cheal leadh*—deepest and saddest of remorseful grievings,—O'Leary's *Glen finnisk*,—Miss Herbert's *Voices of the Past*, and the verses by Dr. Croly, Carroll, Malone, and many others, confer upon this volume a welcome freshness and importance.

At the same time it must be owned that these additions might have been enlarged by many admirable pieces from D'Arcy M'Ghee, Dalton Williams, D. F. Macarthy, and some others; and it must also be acknowledged that this book has a defect. Lover, with a view of showing the variety as well as extent of Irish song, has given specimens of the popular comic lyrics I have lately referred

to, and which it became his especial province to attack and supersede. Even considered, however, as curiosities they are too coarse to be agreeable, and, I think, upon reflection he would have decided on their exclusion. I must find another fault with him. Careful and adequate as are his selections generally, the only one he can be charged with being unjust to is—himself. In culling from his own pages, he has given us some of the weakest of his lyrics, seemingly because they are better known in connection with their charming airs. But in a collection where these lyrics were to be read, and not sung, surely he had a right to think of his reputation as a poet.

Of Lover's merits as a critic, despite his own modest disclaimers, a fair acknowledgment is due. He was no antiquarian, as he confesses—no Celtic scholar who could compare the claims of ancient and modern Irish song—but he was familiar with its history, knew the causes, and could enlarge instructively on the distinctions of its various classes, and, well acquainted with their leading specimens, was not unqualified to weigh and authenticate them in the duty of selection. His biographical notices are always faithful and compact, and if, in his notes, he has chosen to adopt a rambling pleasantry of tone that is occasionally diffuse, this does not exclude exactness when any point of interest occurs. His musical notes are always valuable. The one on the *Woods of Caillino* clears up with great felicity a perplexing passage in Shakspeare; and that on *Since Celia is my Foe*, and

also that on *The Banks of Banna*, establish very clearly the Irish origin of those tunes.

This book has a further interest for all lovers of Irish minstrelsy in its serving to revive, if it does not settle, two cases of disputed authorship. The first is the song of *Savourneen Deelish*, that has always been attributed to George Colman, because it appeared originally in his play of *The Surrender of Calais*, produced at the Haymarket theatre in 1791. This is a fact, however, which by no means proves he was the author of the production, since it was an old custom for dramas to contain lyrics by other writers; whilst, in the next place, the song in question was always claimed by Lady Morgan,—*Savourneen Deelish* being one of the adaptations to national airs which formed her twelve “Irish melodies,” published in 1806 (preceding, and there is little doubt suggesting, the greater work of Moore), and, as such, is referred to in her *Memoirs*, in a letter written to Mrs. Le Fanu whilst her collection was preparing.*

I fancy the matter may be explained if we remember that the singer of the song was the celebrated Irish comedian Johnstone, who, probably being in want of a pathetic air for his new character, wrote to his friend Owenson, the actor—a great authority on native music—and was supplied by him not only with the tune of *Savourneen Deelish*, but also words to it by his daughter Sydney (then at least twenty years of age), who afterwards

* Vol. ii. p. 164.

wanting them for her own collection, did not hesitate to use them. A far more interesting matter, and a much more difficult one to settle, is the true paternity of that great favourite, *The Exile of Erin*. This renowned and matchless lament has been so long identified with Campbell, that one repels a doubt even upon the point as a kind of literary profanation, and of course the repugnance is greatly increased on the part of all who have known the poet—his manly, candid, fervid nature being the last that could be associated with the meanness of imposture.

And yet the circumstances of the case are very singular and puzzling. Campbell stated, in a letter to the *Times*, in June, 1830, that he wrote the lines in question when on a visit to Altona, in Germany, in 1801, and transmitting them to the *Morning Chronicle*, they were published in that paper in the autumn of the same year; and he afterwards communicated, in some correspondence on the matter, that their subject was suggested to him by his encountering at Altona the outlawed rebel, Anthony M'Cann. Mr. Hercules Ellis, on the contrary, in a letter that is appended to Barry's collection of Irish songs, asserts that *The Exile of Erin* was written by George Nugent Reynolds, the well-known Irish lyrist, in 1798, owing to a mournful letter he received from John Cormick, the expatriated patriot in America.

This song, Mr. Ellis says, was sung, shown, and given to five of the writer's friends in the autumn of that year, all of whom (and their names are furnished) deposed before

a magistrate to the fact of Reynolds' authorship, when they heard of its denial three years afterwards in the columns of the *Morning Chronicle*. Mr. Ellis further states that the *Exile of Erin*, as the avowed production of G. N. Reynolds, was used in the Belfast School of Music during the winter of 1798; and he says also that Mr. Fallen, one of the witnesses he adduces, contested in the *Chronicle* Campbell's claim immediately after that claim was made. I may add that a Mr. Cronelly, in a work published in Dublin in 1864, devotes six-and-twenty pages to establishing the right of the Irish poet.* Surely a matter so little settled, and of so much interest to the lovers of song, is destined to receive a little further elucidation.

In 1859 a public event became the means of drawing out another and not inferior talent of Lover. This event was the Burns Festival. The centenary anniversary of the birthday of the poet was celebrated throughout Scotland, as many will remember, with the greatest enthusiasm and fervour, meetings and banquets taking place in all its cities and many of its villages. At the dinner which was given at Glasgow, under the presidency of Sir Archibald Alison, Lover attended as a steward, and returned thanks for the poets of Ireland, in a speech whose point and liveliness were very much applauded. The event was also honoured in London by various meetings of Scotia's sons, and by the directors of the Crystal Palace making it the

* "Notes and Queries," third series, vol. vi., September 5th, 1868.

subject of an entertainment, and offering a prize for an ode or poem to be recited during the day.

A poetic competition is a testimony to genius which our leading writers so invariably shrink from as something derogatory to their station, leaving a mob of mediocrities to crowd the course which they abandon, that it was very pleasant on this occasion to see the laurels won by a new candidate of such genuine power as Isa Craig, whose verses are among the worthiest that have been tendered to the poet's memory. Lover, who had shown by his visit to Glasgow how much he sympathized with the event, nevertheless felt that this competition opened the door to a little sarcasm, and accordingly was prompted to attempt some imitations of popular authors contending for the prize, after the manner of the *Rejected Addresses*—those first, and, need I add, most immortal of English travesties.

It is sufficient praise to say that Lover has come nearer to his renowned model than any one else whom it has inspired. Two or three of his pieces, I think, may be fairly placed upon its level; they catch, as I have already said, so much of the mode of thinking of their originals in union with their manner, giving the form, as it were, of the mind under a ludicrous habiliment. Had they, however, been so meritorious as to equal their type throughout, the reasons are obvious why it was impossible they should have achieved a like success. The *Rejected Addresses* were produced in a highly literary and dramatic age. Great

poets infused the cultivated with a new poetic taste, and great actors rendered the stage a general and paramount enjoyment.

Accordingly, the rebuilding of Drury Lane was almost a national event. Out of the one hundred and fifty *Addresses* which contended for the honour of inaugurating the re-opening, it was believed that a certain portion came from the first writers of the time. Thus everything contributed to strengthen the blow of these burlesques, irrespective of their unusual merits. There was a great excitement, poetic sympathy, and grand literary originals. Poor Lover was not so fortunate as to have any such assistance. He had neither the event to rouse attention (in London, that is to say), nor the grand originals to travesty, nor the ideal period to appeal to; he lived at a time which was much more material than poetic—an age of realism, which had deprived satire of all its elegance and airiness, and hardened it into mere extravagance,—cynical, sceptical, and slangy.

These circumstances were of themselves quite sufficient to limit his success to purely literary circles, or simply a cultivated few who still retained their early tastes; but, as if all these were not enough, his book which should in every way have attracted public notice was published under a pseudonyme (*Ben Trovato*), and with a title which had no reference to the event that gave it birth—*Rival Rhymes*. Strictly occasional in its character, the occasion itself was wholly concealed. Had it been called *Rejected Prize Poems*

or anything else that was explanatory, some attention must have been drawn to it, and some acknowledgment made of its merits.

As it was, it is the annoying fact that these imitations, which are not only among the cleverest and most humorous, but the freshest and least expected of all the efforts of their author, never reached the world at all. The great mass of his admirers have remained up to this hour in total ignorance of their existence. A meagre selection from them, it is true, has been appended to his *Songs and Poems*, but in this shape, I believe, they have been merely condemned to their first obscurity. Surely it is not, therefore, too much to hope that in some future edition of his works these travesties will be included in their unmutated form, and with some explanatory second title, which shall draw attention to their claims.

One of the most striking facts respecting them is that Campbell, who, on account of his fervour and nervous simplicity, is omitted in the *Rejected Addresses*, constitutes Lover's cleverest specimen. The reason, however, is that the original is not burlesqued at all, but, on the contrary, closely imitated—the verse rising to a flow of earnestness that is not unworthy of Campbell's hand. *The Battle of the Baltic*, with all its wonderfully-compressed vigour and strangely enkindling rhythm, gets a vivider and worthier reflection than any other pen has caught for us. Imitation rather than burlesque is also the form of rendering Father Prout, who, to the measure of

his *Bells of Shandon*, is made to address the "Bard of Ayr" in lines that very charmingly reproduce that genial writer.

Again, the travesty of Longfellow, modelled on his noble *Hiawatha*, has this spirit at its outset—the image of Time, in the opening verse, as the mighty Hunter and Destroyer, who stalks in silence through a wilderness, whilst great fames, like giant trees, look down on him defyingly, has undoubted force and dignity. The most difficult attempt of the collection—many would say the least appropriate—is the travesty of Milton's *Allegro*; yet it is one of Lover's best successes, not merely in the singular skill with which he has caught the fitful and dancing metre, but the poetic spirit that so happily infuses the jocose, and divests the effort of irreverence. Humour preponderates in other instances. The burlesque of Macaulay, in the *Battle of Glenlivet*, has some highly-diverting lines; and the sham specimen of Burns in Mr. M'Fash's *Lixmaleerie*, which so well exposes the merely mechanical imitators of the poet, turns the Scotch dialect into a jargon that is singularly comic.

The three prose pieces of the collection are of corresponding merit. The profound platitudes of Mr. Tupper are most amusingly parodied,—the terse cynicism of Thackeray reappears in all its incisiveness,—whilst the verbose pedantry of Lord Brougham, with his "state of learning among the Greeks," and revival of letters in the Middle Ages, alternating with the theory that education is

the source of genius, and a properly-constructed school system would produce a Burns in every village—if it were not almost a transcript of his lordship's letter to the Burns' committee, might be sworn to as coming from no other hand than his.

The course of the same year (1859) produced another public event which had its influence on Lover, though in a wholly different direction. This was the rise of the Volunteer movement—one of the most notable features of our time, which, speedily filling with rifle companies every city in the kingdom, led among others to the formation of the "London Irish Volunteers," under the command of the Marquis of Donegal. Lover was now becoming elderly—he had entered on his sixty-second year, and, though his health was still unbroken, he might well have been excused had he contented himself with simply wishing all success to the good cause. So far from it, however, he took an active part in the meeting which established the "London Irish"—was placed on its "finance committee"—and, after working hard at its accounts, joined its drill at Westminster Hall, and, by his punctuality and vigour, set an example that was not surpassed by the youngest and heartiest members of the corps.

An accident to his knee suspended his regimental duties, but he did not relax his attendance at the committee; and, taking the effort altogether, in connection with his age and other circumstances, it must be regarded as one of the most manly and honourable testimonies of his life.

He also rendered some little service to the movement by his talents. He wrote and composed his Volunteer songs, all of which were well received, and two of them especially—*Defence, but not Defiance*, and his lively strain of the *Two Barrels*—produced a very great impression. The sale of the latter was one of the largest that had been known for many years, nearly eight hundred copies having been disposed of in a week.

With these and other occupations Lover's time flowed on pleasantly up to his sixty-seventh year. Indeed, it may be said that the interval which occurred between the period of his second marriage and this of 1864 was one of the most propitious of his life. A home that was all he could wish for, the free exertion of his powers, and means sufficient, if but moderate, were all made more enjoyable by the blessing of good health, which, somewhat shaken in America, had long been re-established. This improvement was mainly caused by the country life he had been led to adopt at Ealing, Barnes, and Sevenoaks, owing to the delicate health of his wife—when the good he derived himself from its fresh air and earlier hours proved that in this, as in other things, their interests were identical.

At the same time this was a change which many of his friends must have thought extraordinary. It was not easy to conceive a man who had passed all his days in society, and had both drawn from and bestowed on it so much relief and animation, resigning its attractions so abruptly. Great and varied as were his resources, he had so long

shared them with the world that it seemed a peculiar selfishness he should now confine them to his own home. The puzzle was all the greater that he showed no sign of growing old. The wonderful fountain of his spirits seemed only to increase its volume as it narrowed its area. Time, whose pressure he had so long combated, appeared to weary of the contest and come to a kindly truce with him. Nevertheless it was at this moment that his pleasant days came to an end.

His good health suddenly deserted him, and with so little note of warning, that up to the hour of his positive illness he was unconscious of his danger. He was attacked with a hæmorrhage of the lungs, which was no sooner set at rest than other symptoms followed that were scarcely less alarming. On consulting as soon as possible the eminent physician, Dr. Sibson, he learnt that his heart was seriously affected, and that it was essential to his safety he should pass the winter in a milder climate. Thus in an instant the entire scheme of his future life was swept away. He had to resign his home at Seven-oaks, and all the arrangements and connections, social and professional, he had formed there, and migrate to the Isle of Wight, where, not finding himself as secure from forbidden chills as he expected, he thence transferred himself to Jersey, which became his abode for the rest of his days.

From this period to that of his death, a tranquil interim of four years, Lover sank into an invalid. What a difficult fact to realize—the vigorous, buoyant being, whose

frame some Irish fairy seemed to have charmed against pain and weakness, whose step was so elastic, and whose voice was so inspiring ! But sudden feebleness and weariness were not the extent of his sad change. His heart disease was complicated with severe bronchial affection, and to these was added deafness, which, though it had often annoyed him temporarily, now returned and became abiding. There can be no question that all this infirmity must have subjected him to much suffering, however, on the whole, alleviated by the genial atmosphere to which he had flown.

Nor was his pain entirely physical. It is easy to conceive the trial to one of his warm responsive nature in the giving up of his English home, and the cheering presence of old friends, to go away into practical exile, and pass his last days in the midst of strangers. Decay and suffering, however severe, lose their gloom in domestic sunlight ; and of this, save in the devotion of his attached wife, he was deprived. It is very probable, therefore, that Lover, under all this burden, mental and bodily, might have sunk into a depression which would have greatly aided his disease, had he not been sustained by a deeper feeling than any I have yet ascribed to him, and which I have purposely delayed mentioning till I could do so in the fitting place.

One of the most honourable and gratifying facts that can be referred to in respect to him is, that his life was such a pure one. In the days of his greatest gaiety, and

when he lived most within the vortex and seductions of society, it could be said of him, as of few others, that he was a man exempt from vices. His popularity and personal attraction must have exposed him to much temptation, and that he should have been able to endure it without any deterioration of principle or feeling is certainly to pronounce on him no moderate eulogium. Such a distinction has been usually attributed to the strength of his domestic affections, and his absorbing love for art, or rather, it should be said, for the many arts he practised; but I have always been inclined to think that a fact so remarkable is capable of a deeper explanation.

I believe the great shield he possessed, amidst his variety of dangers, lay in his true religious feeling—in that profounder view of morality arising from his relation to his Maker which he owed to early instruction, and which, as he grew up to manhood, gave to his view of Christianity such a thoroughly practical character. It is possible that throughout the busier and more exuberant portion of his life, whilst unreservedly acknowledging the great truths of his faith, he did little more than pay respect to its ordinary observances; but it is quite clear that, from the period of his daughter's death and his second marriage, and also, I may say, his comparative retirement from society, the higher feelings of his nature began to strengthen and control him, and conduct him to wider sources both of conviction and consolation.

Upon this point I can refer to his journals as contain-

ing indisputable evidence, and I have no doubt they could be supported by the testimony of some still surviving friends, whom he selected as the depositaries of his deeper thoughts and sympathies. It is true that religion was a subject upon which he was always somewhat reticent. He evidently cherished it as something much too sacred to be talked about—as a matter that we had better try to live up to than discuss ; and, in addition, his contempt for cant, and for religious cant of all things (to him the monster profanation), was a feeling so ungovernable, that it often led him into suppressing what he would otherwise have owned. His life, however, was his best testimony. A sincere member of the Church of England, and one who accepted all her teachings, his practice could never be cited as an impeachment of his faith.

At the failure of his health, then, it will be seen, he was provided with not the least effectual means to bear up both mind and body—one that was strong enough not merely to give him patience under suffering, but a cheerful resignation at the decay of earthly dreams. The source of all religion is gratitude, and in the full sense of the Creator's mercies he learnt submission to His will. Thus he was enabled to resume his labours at all favourable moments, and if with diminished vigour, at least with no abated zest. He still painted, wrote, and composed—kept up his correspondence with all his friends—and, at intervals of better health, he had even his moments of enjoyment. He could visit and receive some of his attentive Jersey

neighbours, and on occasions, actually favour them with some of his old songs.

One of the best traits of his character was the desire to communicate happiness to even the humblest he encountered (as was the case on his visit to Glasgow, when he sang *Rory O'More* to a group of delighted factory girls in the employment of Mr. Symington), and this amiability was not conquered by the worst inroads of his disease. More extraordinary, however, was the strength which, in spite of all physical ravages, he retained up to the last. Every summer, when perfectly safe from his great enemy—a chill—he paid a brief visit to London, and though, of course, incurring danger from fatigue and over-excitement, it is very wonderful the hard day's work he would often manage to get through. During the last visit he made, which was in 1867, his journal records a round of calls on lawyer, banker, publisher, and a host of scattered friends, which many a busy city man might read with feelings of envy.

Thus active to the last, and cheerful and happy as they were active, the days of Samuel Lover slowly and calmly came to a close. Heartily enjoying all his blessings, whilst duly submissive to his pains, there was an example in his composure which many a prouder man has wanted. The opening of the year 1868 promised favourably to the sufferer. He was able to keep, with his accustomed cheerfulness, his marriage day and birthday—two of his household festivals; and whilst hoping he might be spared

still to witness their return, he bowed thankfully to the will which had already accorded him so much. A bronchial attack of some severity visited him soon after, from which he fairly rallied ; but a return of the complaint proved too much for his exhausted system, and after a struggle of six weeks, which baffled all the efforts of his friend and physician, Dr. Dickson, his spirit passed to its repose.

He died July the 6th, at his residence, in St. Helier's, and on the 15th of the month was interred at Kensal Green. His comrades of the London Irish Volunteers followed his body to the grave, and the funeral service, at his own request, was read by his dearly esteemed friend, the Rev. Edward Nelson, of St. Stephen's, Regent's Park, by whose earnest and affectionate counsels he had often been enlightened and sustained.

As a last tribute of respect, a tablet to his memory was put up in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, with an inscription by Mr. Nelson, which, in terms simple and affecting, duly acknowledges his worth and talents, and the sustaining hopes with which he died.

SELECTIONS
FROM
UNPUBLISHED PAPERS AND LETTERS.



NOTE.

SAMUEL LOVER left behind him a great number of unpublished writings, which may be divided into four classes—his unacted *Dramas*, his *Entertainments*, his *American Sketches*, and his *Poetry*.

His *Dramas*, being chiefly musical, are necessarily excluded from selection. They have no little literary merit, but they derive so much of their force from the peculiar unity of their words and music, that any quotation from them would, at the best, be little other than dismemberment.

His *Entertainments* are illustrations of Irish character and history, which were written only to serve as introductions to his songs,—and from these I have extracted his Irish sketches, which, as evidences of his humour—and in his *Jemmy Hoy* especially—will not be thought unworthy of the writer of *Barney O'Reirdon* and *The Gridiron*.

The *American Sketches* were intended as the commencement of a book, when Lover's larger literary project was reluctantly abandoned. Unluckily, they are but few; and if these are not only fragmentary, but very often marked with all the hurry of a first production, they are at least characteristic, and, I think, will be found amusing.

And lastly his *Poetry*, serious and comic, is separable into two portions—his earlier and later compositions: the first effusions of his youth, and the occasional products of his age—and from these

I have been able to select many specimens of his genial fancy, which will scarcely disappoint the reader; whilst the concluding poem of the list—*Lover's* most elaborate attempt in verse—if much compressed on account of its length, will hardly fail to demonstrate his reflection, sense, and pleasantry.

The few letters that are appended are interesting less for any literary value than as illustrations of the fervid and estimable nature of the man.

IRISH SKETCHES.



IRISH BARDS AND IRISH MUSIC.

AMONG the most certain as well as the pleasantest criteria of a people's antiquity is their possession of national music. It is like the distinction of high birth—no one despises but he who is without it. There is no country that has enjoyed but has shown its sense of such a treasure, and it has often proved the most enduring title that a land can make to ancestral honours. Should any one question those of Ireland, she has only to point to her music and say, "Behold my title deeds!" Upon this particular, at least, however it may have varied upon others, public opinion has been unanimous. The world's concurrent and applausive testimony has acknowledged the right of Ireland to be styled "the land of song."

The history of her music is that of her bards. They were the great favourites of the Celtic tribes at the earliest period of which we have any record. Strabo, Diodorus, and others tell us that they flourished before the time of Augustus, and were held in higher honour among the Celtic nations than the Gothic. In Ireland, however, they enjoyed a notable pre-eminence. They formed an established order, which could boast of its high appointments

and its lucrative possessions. They also discharged distinguished functions—they were the poets, the Court minstrels, and the genealogists of their time. In a country where antiquity was particularly prized, the services were duly valued of those who could unravel its mysteries, from Milesius down to their own day, and from Adam down to Milesius. Besides this, who but the bard could enliven great festivities with songs of love and merriment—who could so depict the loveliness of woman—who so rehearse the joys of wine—who so celebrate the valour and the triumphs of his chieftain, or raise the impassioned lament over departed worth and greatness?

The musical eminence of the bard was as well attested as his social. As early as the seventh century Ireland was as celebrated for her minstrelry as she was throughout Europe for her learning. She had been furnishing scholars to all nations, either in her own sons or in her students; and the venerable Bede tells us that it was the custom of the English of all ranks to retire to her shores for study and devotion, and to acquire the harper's art. In the fourteenth century Giraldus Cambrensis, though a native of Wales—which was famous for its music—frankly gives the palm to Ireland for pre-eminence in that pursuit; whilst Caradoc, another Welshman, with equal candour acknowledges that his countrymen owed to the Irish all their instruments, tunes, and measures. Even Scotland, in those early days, did not disavow her obligations. John de Fordun, a Scottish priest who visited the "land of

song" towards the end of the fourteenth century, proclaims it to be the "musical fountain" which had flowed over into Wales and Scotland; and John Major, in his panegyric on James I. of Scotland, calls him an Orpheus that touched the harp even more exquisitely than the Irish, who were its most eminent professors.

The harp, then, was the national instrument. Mr. Beauford, in his essay on its history, says that "its true figure was discovered by the bards"—and "on examination it will prove to have been constructed on exact harmonic principles;" and among the proofs that its fame was widely diffused at an early period, the illustrious Dante had an Irish harp—of whose makers he observes that they not only excelled in its construction, but had been unrivalled in its use for ages. The Irish had four kinds of harps, the larger of which—the *clar seagh*—was used only by the minstrels, whilst the other and smaller instruments were appropriated by ladies, ecclesiastics, and members generally of the higher classes. Again, their musical vocabulary was wholly distinct from any other, clearly proving an original school; and in naming the strings of the instrument, they showed that poetic and descriptive power of language which is remarkable in the conversation of the Irish to this day.

The use of the harp, then, in Ireland, was co-extensive with the love of music. It was one of the usages of good society. At any festive meeting the instrument was handed round to all the company in turn, when every one

was expected to display his skill and taste on it. Its use was, in fact, a part of a gentleman's education—the want of which would have been considered a very discreditable deficiency. It is clear, therefore, that the chief performers on an instrument such as this must have been great favourites with all classes, and their influence was not lessened when their social standing was combined with so much political importance.

By their impassioned songs in honour of their country the bards kept alive the spirit of national independence. They thus became a body obnoxious in the greatest degree to their rulers, and were very soon subjected to a cruel persecution. This occurred earliest perhaps in Wales, where the harpers, having prompted the boldest resistance to the Saxon yoke, were, of course, among the first to undergo the invader's vengeance. When the Saxons in their turn were subjected by the Normans, their own bards were in like fashion doomed to expulsion or extinction; and when, in the blending of Norman and Saxon, the wrongs of conquest were forgotten—then war was proclaimed against the bard of Ireland, as an opponent of Anglo-Saxon rule.

Music, however, the object of such hatred, was destined to triumph over her assailant. If undelivered by her sword, Ireland recovered in her harp the lasting acknowledgment of her renown, and the testimony was all the greater considering how arbitrary was its source. It was at the command of Henry VIII. that the harp, the emblem

of Ireland, was quartered in the arms of England. Still, agreeably to the old saying, that "we may be favourable to the treason, and yet may hate the traitor"—in those days it seems that, much as they liked the music, they detested the musicians. Capital enactments were passed against "harpers, rhymers, and genealogists"—and so it came to pass that, whilst the harp was honourably hung in the quarterings of England, the unhappy harpers themselves were both hung and quartered in Ireland.

Still, in spite of all this cruelty, the bards survived and flourished. They were welcomed, housed, and sheltered by the people in all directions, and however liberal and cordial was the entertainment they received, it was fortunately in their power to give ample in return. It is curious to observe that England is the only country where laws were enacted against music, and one is almost tempted to conjecture that her long and fierce crusade against the national strains of Ireland is to be numbered among the causes of her having no native music of her own. So long as the bard was connected with rebellion and was hunted down in one land, his was an office that was scarcely likely to become popular in the other.

Henry's illustrious daughter Elizabeth was one of the great lovers of Irish music. The "Talbot Papers" contained in Lodge's *Illustrations of British History* give a letter from the Earl of Worcester to the Earl of Shrewsbury, which has this decisive passage—"We are frolic here

in Court—much dancing in the Privy Chamber of country dances before the Queen's Majesty, who is exceedingly pleased therewith. Irish tunes are at this time most pleasing to her." Again, that Irish songs must have been current in England at that period may be deduced from the fact that Shakspeare uses in his Henry V. the burthen of an Irish song—the words, that is to say—and in the original language,—a fact which, by-the-by, has much disturbed the repose of commentators, and given rise to a quantity of discussion which might have been avoided had these gentlemen, in addition to their other stores of knowledge, only possessed that of Irish.

The last of the purely Irish bards was Carolan. It is now little over a century that he died and left behind him some of the most original and delightful songs and music of his country. Blind from the age of eighteen, his reading must have been very limited; and yet, considering the period he lived in, his literary accomplishment was something wonderful. Goldsmith testifies to this, who saw him in his own boyhood, and in reference to his poetic power compares its vigour to that of Pindar. To a highly convivial spirit he united, in his love effusions, a singularly pure and delicate feeling,—and as an evidence of his constancy, as well as of the exquisite sense of touch which is peculiar to the blind, the story is related of him that he recognized his early love, from whom he had been parted twenty years, by the simple pressure of her hand. His charming song of *Mabel Kelly* well illustrates his

poetic fancy, which was as graceful as it was tender, and especially the second verse :—

“To gaze on her beauty, the young hunter lies
’Mong the branches that shadow her path in the grove.
But, alas ! if her eyes
The rash gazer surprise,
All eyesight departs from the victim of love,
And the poor blind one steals home with his heart full of sighs.”

THE IRISH BRIGADE.

THE story of the Irish Brigade is one of the most interesting episodes in the history of the Irish people. Their ardent military spirit, which was one of the results of their Celtic origin, had been wasted through many centuries, in savage feuds among themselves, or in fruitless resistance to their invaders—and when at length it had become disciplined, under Sarsfield and St. Ruth, and acquired a force which might have yielded England the greatest service in her ensuing wars, it was lost to her through the intolerance which proscribed the religion of a nation.

The laws of the period, which forbade Catholics to bear arms under the English crown, blindly renounced all the advantages to be derived from their devotion, and compelled the army of James II., when disbanded at the Peace of Limerick, to pass over to the continent, and enroll under its various monarchs. Almost every throne of Europe profited by the bold hearts and stalwart frames of the buoyant sons of the Emerald Isle, except only the one that still nominally claimed their allegiance whilst repudiating their services. It was in France, however,

that James's army was found principally to reassemble,—owing, probably, to the greater sympathy of the Hibernian and the Celtic temperaments,—and there formed themselves into a body, which soon became distinguished under its title of the “Irish Brigade.”

These gallant emigrants, who left behind them all their social and domestic ties, carried abroad with their untarnished honour and their indomitable courage all their unconquerable gaiety, and their undying love for their native country. Almost as deep, however, perhaps, was their love for their native music. So strong was it, indeed, that they refused to march to the French tunes, and on all military occasions insisted on the use of their national airs—a gratification that was conceded to them, though the same favour was denied to the Swiss. For this, however, there was a reason. The music of the *Ranz des Vaches* awoke in the breast of the latter such a passionate longing for home, that it often led to desertion; whilst in the poor Irishman, whose home was lost to him, no such danger was to be feared.

A continuous evil resulted from the expatriation of these men. The Brigade, which was sent into exile when over 14,000 strong, was always actively recruited in Ireland, however illegally, and at some risk,—and thus, year after year, the valorous youth that ought to have fought under the flag of William and Marlborough, went abroad to espouse the cause and swell the forces of their enemies—until, at length, it fell to their lot to face the

heroes they should have shouldered, and to inflict on England her greatest military disaster throughout the century. It was the impetuous charge of the Irish Brigade that won for the French the battle of Fontenoy. Well might George II. exclaim, on reviewing such a fact —“Sad indeed are the laws that deprive me of such soldiers.”

During the course of almost a century the Brigade was enrolled in the French army, and had an honourable share in all the latter's brightest achievements in Flanders, Spain, and Italy. Many instances of its staunch fidelity and its daring, decisive courage might be quoted from the military records of those days; but one especially may be selected, which in its singular combination of the heroic and the grotesque must be regarded as very national.

Cremona, besieged by Prince Eugène, and defended by the French, was surprised one morning before dawn, and would inevitably have been lost but for the promptitude of the Irish. Whilst the punctilious and ornate Frenchmen were deliberately buttoning up their regimentals, the former, at the sound of their trumpets, jumped out of bed, and, simply staying to buckle on their crossbelts and cartouch boxes, seized their guns and hurried to the Square, where, on forming in fighting order, their commander's words, “Halt—dress!” were, at least in one respect, superfluous. Their indifference to appearances on this occasion was all the greater that the period was mid-winter, and the city was near the Alps. In this

condition they were charged by the Austrian Cuirassiers. It was steel-coats against night-shirts ; but the linen trade of Ireland proved the more formidable of the two. The Austrians were driven back, and the French had time to form and recover possession of the town. For this brilliant service the Brigade was honoured with the emphatic thanks of Louis XIV., and also had their pay increased.

But these fearless fellows, as may be supposed, carried abroad to their new service not only their courage and fidelity, but all their exuberance as Irishmen. Their rollicking spirit and love of fun were quite as great as their love of fighting, and at times were so opposed to propriety and discipline, that the martinets of the French ranks had to make formal complaints on the matter. It was on one such occasion that a great compliment was paid them by the brave Duke of Berwick, who, however, had good reason to love them for their devotion to his father. "Marshal," said the king to him, "this Irish Brigade gives me more trouble than all my army put together."—"Please your Majesty," replied the Duke, "your enemies make just the same complaint of them."

The idol of the Brigade was the celebrated Marshal Saxe, whose great bravery, in union with his jovial, mirthful temperament, gave him a character that was so engaging and so kindred to their own. It was in reference to him originated one of the blunders of poor Pat that has so often been repeated and localized everywhere.

The Marshal was wounded in some engagement, and, moreover, it was reported—in his *back*. None of the Brigade, however, would believe it. “When did he ever show his back to them?” was the general exclamation. “Wasn’t it his face they knew the most of, and wasn’t it *their* backs that he knew best?” At last a solution of the mystery was hit upon—“He was purshuing ’em, you see, and just to make the villins think that, on the conthrary, he was retrating, he buttoned his coat behind him!”

Of the anecdotes and jokes told of the Brigade during their extended foreign service—proofs of a humour and light-heartedness which even exile could not subdue—the number is indeed legion. Gallic vanity forced them often into the attitude of censors, and several of their repartees are excellent, and as full of sense as they were of pleasantry. Among the mass of these is one that has been often referred to other sources,—when a Frenchman claiming for his country the invention of all the elegances named among other things a ruffle, and Pat answered “We improved on it—we put to it a shirt.”

In the same spirit, but less known, was his retort upon a shopkeeper in some petty town where he was quartered. The place had rather a pretentious gate, and the grocer, dilating on its grandeur, and asking what the Irish would say if they possessed it—“Faith, they’d say,” was his reply, “we’ll kape the big gate shut, or the dirty little town will be after running out of it.” The sarcasm, however, was deeper and more essentially Hibernian when, on his going

somewhere to dine, after hearing great praises of French cookery, he saw a pot of soup brought in with a bit of meat floating on the top of it,—upon which he pulled off his coat, and being asked why he did so, said, “Sure I am going to have a swim for that little bit of mate there.”

Among the adventures recorded of the Brigade, one of the most amusing was an occurrence in the time of the Regent Orleans, in honour of whose birthday a grand masquerade was given in Paris. It was a high-class affair; tickets were a double louis d'or each—all the rank and beauty of Paris were assembled round the Regent, and a costly and luxurious supper crowned the attractions of the night. Whilst the entertainment was proceeding, one of the Prince's suite approached and whispered to him, “It is worth your Royal Highness's while to step into the supper rooms; there is a yellow Domino there, who is the most extraordinary cormorant ever witnessed;—he is a prodigy, your Highness—he never stops eating and drinking; and the attendants say, moreover, that he has not done so for some hours.” His Royal Highness went accordingly—and sure enough there was the yellow Domino, laying about him as described, and swallowing everything as ravenously as if he had only just begun. Raised pies fell before him like garden palings before a field-piece—pheasants and quails seemed to fly down his throat in a little covey—the wine he drank threatened a scarcity, whatever might be the next vintage.

After watching him for some time, the Duke acknow-

ledged he was a wonder, and laughingly left the room; but shortly afterwards, on passing through another, he saw the yellow Domino again, and as actively at work as ever,—devastating the dishes everywhere, and emptying the champagne bottles as rapidly as they were brought to him. Perfectly amazed, the Duke at last could not restrain his curiosity. “Who,” he asked, “is that insatiate ogre that threatens such annihilation to all the labours of our cooks?” Accordingly, one of the suite was dispatched to him. “His Royal Highness the Duke of Orleans desires the yellow Domino to unmask.” But the Domino begged to be excused, pleading the privilege of masquerade. “There is a higher law,” replied the officer—“the royal order must be obeyed.” “Well, then,” answered the incognito, “if it must be so, it must;” and unmasking, exhibited the ruddy visage of an Irish trooper.

“Why, in the name of Polyphemus!” exclaimed the Regent as he advanced to him, “who and what are you? I have seen you eat and drink enough for a dozen men at least, and yet you seem as empty as ever.”

“Well, then,” said the trooper, “since the saycret must come out, plase your Royal Highness, I am one of Clares’ Horse,—that’s the guard of honour to-night,—and when our men was ordered out, we clubbed our money to buy a ticket, and agreed to take our turn at the supper-table, turn and turn about.”

“What!” exclaimed the Duke, “the whole troop coming to supper?”

“Oh, it’s asy, plase your Highness ; sure one domino would do for all of us—if ache tuk it in turn. I’m only the eighteenth man, and there’s twelve more of us to come.”

The loud laughter of the jovial Duke, probably the heartiest he had had for a long time, was the response to this explanation, followed by a lous d’or to the dragoon, and a promise to keep his “saycret,” till the entire troop had supped.

The career of the Irish Brigade closed with the approach of the French Revolution—and fortunately for them, no doubt ; since, had they remained in France, there is little question they would have maintained their loyalty, and been massacred like the Swiss. But before they were broken up, they were addressed by the king in person, who, thanking them with much emotion for their devotion to the house of Bourbon, which they had displayed throughout a century, presented them with a banner in which the shamrock and fleur de lis were interwoven, with a laudatory motto. There was some ground for the king’s emotion, if the historians of the Brigade are at all to be relied on—that in the course of the century upwards of 450,000 Irishmen had died in the ranks of France. What an army lost to England—what a comment on the Penal Code !

OUTLAWS AND EXILES.

IRELAND has had her outlaws, civil and political, almost as numerous as her exiles. They were, in the first instance, her patriots, who retreated to their wilds and fastnesses in order to sustain the national freedom. Ordinarily the history of such people has more romance in it than crime. They may be called outlaws by their invaders, and they may make invasion rather troublesome, but our sympathies are likely rather to go with them than against them,—as in English history, for instance, we side with the Welsh who took to their hills, rather than with the Saxons who dispossessed them, and—when the rule of the latter was overthrown—rather with the Saxon that succumbed and suffered, than with the Norman that oppressed.

Our repugnance has only arisen when such men have at length been tempted to forget the general good in the indulgence of their own—when, in their refusal to submit to new laws, they have at length failed to respect the oldest—till, all authority being at an end, all order has expired with it, or, on being re-established in some individual will, that will became released from all moral obligations. Some exceptions to the rule of the latter are, of course, to be

adduced, as in the case of Robin Hood, whose merry life in Sherwood forest, however insubordinate, was tempered with so much generosity and gaiety, that its character will always appear to us much more romantic than really criminal.

Of the patriot class of Irish outlaws, the victorious O'Neil, known in English annals as Tyrone, is one of the earliest and most memorable—the ingenuity and skilfulness of the resources he adopted being not less remarkable than the courageous spirit that sustained them. As time, however, advances, a lower type succeeds. We have the robber *pur et simple*, as in the case of “Ned of the Hill,” but who still contrived to mingle some little romantic element with his predatory doings. He was an accomplished musician, as well as a highly intrepid captain—could use his tongue as well as his sword, and was quite as dangerous, it appears, to the fairer sex as to the coarser.

Less graceful, but not less adventurous, was the long-remembered Charley Dempsey, better known under his Irish title of *Cahir na Coppel*, or Charley of the Horses. He was a Queen's County hero, where tradition, I believe, still points to his grave among the hills, and was more distinguished as a robber of cattle than of ordinary property, making constant inroads on the English settlements, and carrying off their horses, which, it is said, he dragged away by their tails, in the manner of the classic giant, in order to avoid their being tracked. Numerous stories are

recounted of his cleverness as well as boldness, and in the sale of his stolen merchandise, as well as in its seizure. On one occasion, it is said, a purchaser asked him to be candid. "Is it a good horse you are selling me?" "For what do you want him?" was the answer. "To send to England." "Oh, he'll do for that; he's a good horse for exportation; he's very well at sea, if he isn't worth much upon land."

At some interval of time succeeded the "Claude Duval" school of outlaws—the gentlemanly highwaymen, who elevated robbery almost into a refinement, and of whom the great exemplar was the famous Redmond O'Hanlon. His exactions were all levied with as much courtesy on the men, as they were marked by a fine air of gallantry towards the ladies. His example became infectious—others assumed his courtly manners, and one even had the audacity to make use of his name. Whereupon, jealous of a fame which had made his career so exceptional, he disguised himself and contrived to fall in with his presumptuous counterfeit,—and when politely asked for his purse in the name of Redmond O'Hanlon, he with equal grace, demurring to being pillaged by himself, speedily disarmed the pretender and carried him off to the neighbouring town, where, by means of his emissaries, he gave him up to justice.

The disbanding of James the Second's army led to the next phase of outlaw life, when the better portion of those soldiers having enrolled themselves in foreign service, the

dregs remained behind, and formed the worst kind of marauders, under the title of Rapparees. The derivation of their name is uncertain, though it is commonly connected with their principal implement—a pike; but no doubt lingers as to their character, the viciousness of which had acquired a tinge of ferocity from their military experience. These were succeeded in the next century by bands of political offenders,—the “White-boys” and “Peep o’ Day Boys,”—who rose against the Penal Code, or in hostility to a rival communion. These men were not robbers in the ordinary sense of the term; but they were outlaws, nevertheless, and in many cases suffered the extremest penalties of the law.

The ludicrous, however, in their instance, as in that of grander culprits, was often mingled with a gloomy fate and a stern display of justice. A White-boy, who was a blacksmith, and who was condemned to transportation for life, excited powerful sympathy on the score of his professional merits. He lived in a hunting county where his aid was thought so valuable, that an application was made to the judge in order that his sentence might be mitigated. “He is the only man, your honour,” said the influential deputation, “who can shoe a horse for miles about us.” “Impossible, gentlemen,” replied the Rhadamanthus; “an example must be made.” “Very true,” observed the applicants; “but, you see, we have only got one blacksmith, whilst we have a crowd of idle weavers. Could not you take one of the weavers?”

The Rapparees, as I have said, were the worst marauders Ireland has produced. Disbanded soldiers of the lowest class, they united to their vices sufficient order to enable them to rob on an extensive scale, and, till they were dispersed by regular troops, they contrived to lay the country under pretty general contribution. Still it must be owned that, with all their villany, these fellows had a spice of humour which, if it did no credit to its nationality, unmistakably proclaimed it.

One of them, arrested for a highway robbery, on being brought before a magistrate, asserted that he was more entitled to be pitied than to be punished.

"Pitied!" exclaimed the justice, whilst his eyebrows arched with more than ordinary wonder and contempt—"and on what account, pray?"

"Sure, on account of my misfortune."

"Your misfortune, indeed! What, that we have caught you, I suppose?"

"Oh, the jintleman that's brought me here knows my misfortune well enough."

But the gentleman was as astonished as the magistrate himself, and as incapable of guessing the culprit's meaning.

"You will own, I suppose," said his worship, "that you stopped this gentleman on the highway?"

"Oh yes! I did that same."

"And that you took from him fifty pounds in Bank of Wexford bills?"

"And there your honour's right again."

"Well, then, you perplexing vagabond, what do you mean by your misfortune?"

"Sure, I mean that the money wasn't in my pocket above a week, when the dirty bank stopped payment, and I was robbed of every shillin'."

BULLS AND BLUNDERS.

THE Irish have achieved a great celebrity in the matter of bulls and blunders. By the uninitiated these are terms which are constantly confounded, but when they are looked into, it will be seen there is the greatest difference between them. Blundering arises from stupidity, and the stupid are a race who are found all over the world ; but the bull—a peculiarity that belongs exclusively to Ireland—is always connected with thought, and originates in the imaginative power of its people. It is not at all a dull absurdity which no one can comprehend—it is always comprehensible, even when it is most confused. It proceeds, not from the want, but the superabundance of ideas, which crowd on each other so fast in an Irishman's pericranium, that they get jammed together, so to speak, in the doorway of his speech, and can only tumble out in their ordinary disorder.

Confusion may indeed be called a national characteristic. It pervades all Irish history. If the stream of the latter in early days has its gleams of bright tranquillity, sorely troubled does it become as it descends the steep of Time, till, as it flows on in later ages, it encounters obstruc-

tions political and religious, which give it a turmoil and perplexity that we cannot survey without deploring. As with the affairs of unhappy Ireland, so has it ever been with its peasantry. Public and social disorders have communicated a jar to the brains of Pat ; and if he can be accused now and then of being a little erratic in his sayings and doings, he can at least console himself by pointing to a long historical authority. He may say—"Arrah ! now, why wouldn't I be confused ? Wasn't all of us confused, and from the airliest times, and isn't a man to be consistent ? Would you have him turn his coat when scarcely a rag of it is left him ?"

A good example of a bull may be cited in the case of the two Irishmen who, fancying that they knew each other, crossed the street to shake hands. On discovering their error—"I beg your pardon," cried the one. "Oh, don't mention it," said the other. "It's a mutual mistake ; you see, I thought it was you, and you thought it was me, and after all, it was neither of us."

A good pendant to this is told of two friends who met and referred to the illness of a third.

"Poor Michael Hogan ! 'Faith, I'm afraid he's going to die."

"And why would he die ?"

"Oh, he's got so thin. You're thin enough, and I'm thin—but, by my sowl, Michael Hogan is thinner than both of us put together."

A bull is sometimes produced by the false use of a word,

as in the case of an Irish watchman giving evidence at a police office.

"What is this man's offence?"

"He was disorderly, your worship, in the strates, last night."

"And did you give him warning before you took him into custody?"

"I did, your worship. I said to him—disperse!"

Again, a bull may be occasioned by a confusion of identities—as when it was said of an ugly man, that he was handsome when an infant, but he was unluckily changed a nurse; or as it was shown in the fervour of a girl, who desiring her lover's miniature, and he fearing it might lead to a discovery—"Oh, it needn't," she exclaimed; "I'll tell the painter not to make it like you."

And, again, a bull may be owing to a limited amount of knowledge—as in the case of an old woman going to the chandler's for a farthing candle, and being told it was raised to a halfpenny on account of the Russian war—"Bad luck to them!" she exclaimed, "and do they fight by candle-light?"

Apart, however, from all of these, the ordinary sayings of the Irish have an imaginative quality which is just as characteristic, and not at all confusing. As, for instance, when they say of a man who is irretrievably ruined—"Saltpetre wouldn't save him, and that is a strong pickle;" or when they would advise another to avoid arrest—"Be off whilst your shoes are good;" or, as they delicately say of

an elderly lady whose number of years they forbear to mention—"A kitten of her age wouldn't play with a cork."

And apart from all of these, again, is the genuine humour of the Irish, which has nothing of the bull in it whatever, but, on the contrary, the clearest notions, and very often the shrewdest sense. I will only cite a couple of instances, which will not be the less welcome if they happen to have been heard before.

A gentleman seeing an Irishman staggering homewards from a fair, and observing to him, "Ah, Darby, I'm afraid you'll find the road you're going is rather a longer one than you think."—"Sure, your honour," he replied, "it's not the length of the road I care about, it's the *breadth* of it is destroyin' me."

And again:—In the Bog of Aughrim, in the last century, plenty of gun-barrels used to be found as a memento of its great battle, and there was a blacksmith who dug them up in order to make use of their material. On one occasion one of them exploded in his furnace, when he exclaimed, "Bad luck to your love of murther! isn't the battle of Aughrim out of you yet?"

ST. PATRICK AND THE SARPENT.

A GUIDE'S STORY.

ON a lovely day in summer, when the delightful Lakes of Killarney were putting forth all their attractions, a party of visitors had been enjoying them, now in sailing over their tranquil waters, now in gazing at their silvery waterfalls, now in listening to their pleasing echoes, when they were struck with the perturbed appearance of a well-known little lake, which presented such a contrast to the general calmness of the group. "Oh, sure!" exclaimed the guide, "the wather's always disturbed in that way; biling over like a kettle amost." "And what's the reason?" they inquired. "'Faith, then, ladies and gentlemen, there's rayson enough and to spare: it's all owing to the Sarpent!" "The Sarpent!" they exclaimed. "The Sarpent that St. Patrick rowled into the Lake centuries ago, and beyant that, and that has been tryin' ever since to twist himself back to land again." The whole party were of course in ignorance of any such bewildering event. "Oh, it's the thruth that I am telling ye: the Sarpent's in a box, you see, and he's tryin' to get out of it, and it's his flappin' .

of the lid which kapes the wather in such a flutther." Excitement was at its height, and their ciccrone was requested to oblige them with the particulars.

"Well, then, you all know, ladies and gentlemen, that it was St. Patrick that druv the sarpents and venomous bastes out of Ireland, and made it what it is—the swatest jewel of the world to live in. Well, there was one sarpent, I must tell you, that was too strong to be druv out, and beyant that, you must know, was a most onraisonable baste besides—for he wouldn't listen to the hape of argyments St. Patrick was discoorsing to him, when he towld him to get out o' that, and be off to Botany Bay. 'Oh, bathershin!' says the Sarpent; 'is it an Absentee you want to make of me? I love the country too well to lave it—it's my native mud, and I'll have no other.'

"'Oh, very well, then,' says the Saint; 'if them's the pathriotic sentiments that inspires your venomous breast, I must make a nice house for you to live in.' And so the Saint set to work, you see, and made a big iron chist, with as many locks and bars on it as they say they've got at Newgate, and then went to the cave where the Sarpent lived in retirement, and began to whistle for him, and coax him out just to look at the house he had made for him. But the Sarpent, you see, was cunning, like the first one of his breed—he'd got a notion that St. Patrick wouldn't be the asiest of landlords—so says he, 'I thank your riverence mightily for all the thruble you have been takin', but I'd rather stop where I am.' 'Oh, just come out now, and

see the house—that won't hurt you,' says St. Patrick; 'and if you don't like it, you can lave it.'

"Well, to make a long story short, the baste did come out at last; but he didn't like the look of the box at all, and began to find all sorts of faults with it. 'It's too small for me,' says he; 'axing your riverence's pardon, that's a house that wouldn't howld me.' 'I'll lay a gallon o' porther,' says St. Patrick, 'the house is big enough for two of ye.' Now, the Sarpent was a dry baste—he wasn't a *water*-snake at all,—and he was uncommon fond o' porther, and he thought—the cunning villain—that he'd play the Saint a trick, and chate him clane out of the liquor. So in he rowls himself into the box, and, just to show it wouldn't howld him, he swells himself out for all the world like an alderman who was swallerin' his third bottle at a Dublin dinner, and be token of that what does he do but, moreover, lave half of his long tail hanging out.

"'Look there, now,' says the Sarpent—'you see I can't get in. You've lost the bet, your riverence.' But what does the Saint do but suddenly clap down the lid of the box on him, when he whips in his tail for fear 'twould be cut off, and so got packed into the chist as tight as a hundredweight of butter. 'There now,' says St. Patrick, 'I've won the bet, you see.' 'Then let me out,' says the Sarpent, 'and I'll pay you like a gentleman.' 'Oh, I'm in no hurry,' says St. Patrick. 'You shall pay me when I ax you for it, and that won't be for a day or two;' and so he rowls the box down the hill, and then pitches it into the lake,

where it has been lying iver since; and the villain, day and night, has been trying to get it open,—but as the lid, you see, is too heavy for him, he kapes it flappin' without ceasin', and that's the rayson that the wather is always in such a flutther."

THE DUBLIN FISHWOMAN.

THE Dublin fishwoman is a character. It has been considered one of the features of the lower order of the Irish that they are not fond of money, but if asking three times the value of what they may have got to sell were considered a proof to the contrary, I am afraid the practice of the fishwomen would not tend to my country's credit. The fair ones of this class, too, always like to moisten their mouths before they commence negotiations, declaring "that a drop in rayson" can do no one any harm.

Early in the day Judy is heard in the streets crying, "Haddick, fine haddick!" Mrs. Farrell, a worthy house-keeper, hurries to the door and calls to her. Judy pauses and looks round. "Ah, is it you, Mrs. Farrell? Long life to you, ma'am, but it's glad I am to see you. I hope you're going to buy a power of me to-day, for my heart's broke a'most, carrying this sieve of mine so far. Oh, musha! but I'm thirsty." The lady pities her, and says, "Well, you shall have a drink, Judy." "Oh, long life to you, ma'am!" Mrs. Farrell then despatches her servant girl for a glass of water. Judy sees it, and exclaims, "Wather! oh, Mrs. Farrell, sure you wouldn't put me

off with wather—I don't like wather in my shoes, ma'am, and myself is made of better leather—the laste taste of whiskey, if you plase, ma'am—whiskey, if you've a Christian sowl in you."

The whiskey is at length sent for, but only for the purpose of being diluted, which when Judy detects, she exclaims, "Oh, if you plase, ma'am, don't put wather to it—the whiskey never harms me, but the water tossicates me sadly—just one glass, if you plase, ma'am ; it's as good as five years' life to me." Mrs. Farrell, forced to consent, but anxious as much as possible to minimize the evil, then sends for a small liqueur glass, hoping that the elegance of its form may reconcile her friend to the modesty of its dimensions. "There, Judy," she observes, filling the minute vessel to its brim, "that is a very old glass—that has been in my family for upwards of forty years." "Forty years!" Judy replies. "'Pon my word, then, Mrs. Farrell, it's very little of its age ! Your health, ma'am, and long life to you!"

"And now, Judy, I want a haddock from you." "Well, and there's a beauty, ma'am ; it's enough to look at, not to ate. Oh, it's a fine fish." "Well, and what do you ask for it?" "The fish was scarce this mornin', ma'am—the weather is so hard, you see, they wouldn't come out at all ; and small blame to 'em for that, for who would come out that could help it, cowl'd and blowin' as it is?" "Yes, but what do you want for it?" "So the fish was scarce this mornin'—and——" "What do you ask for it? I can't wait." "Well, ma'am, as you're a good customer, you shall have it

for three shillings." "Three shillings!" "If you please, ma'am." "Take away your fish, Judy; it is quite out of the question." "Well, say half-a-crown." "Take it away; I can't think of it." "Well, two shillings." "Take it away, I say." "Oh dear, ma'am, will you give me nothin' for it? If you see how scarce the fish is in the market! Well, then, what will you give me, ma'am?" "A shilling." "Oh! it's not mine for the money—say eighteenpence." "A shilling." "I couldn't do it if I was to stale 'em, ma'am." "A shilling—and no more."

Mrs. Farrell being a decided woman, is now about to close the door, when Judy vehemently exclaims, "On the vartue of my oath, ma'am, I paid fifteen for it myself—well, I suppose you must have it, for I'm tired of carrying such a load of 'em." "Why, you've just said they were scarce in the market." "So they wor, ma'am—when I bought 'em—but won't you let me have anythin' for the intherest o' my money? Well, Mrs. Farrell, you must take it—they'll only spoil if I kape 'em—fish and famale beauty, as you know, ma'am, is perishable commodities,—here it's for you." "No—that's not the same fish." "Oh, murther! must you have it for a third of the price, and the pick of the sieve in the bargain? Well, there it's for you." "And there's the shilling; and now will you tell me, Judy, one thing,—why do you lose so much of your time in asking so much more than you are always ready to take?" "Lose my time, indeed!—Faix, I lose more than my time, ma'am: I lose five hundred a year, at laste, by not getting what I ax."

PADDY AND THE BEAR.

THE negroes of America were never favourites of the Irish. The cause of the repugnance it would be difficult to say, unless it were that Pat had heard the blacks were not only stupid but particularly lazy ; and though he could excuse laziness in Ireland, where there was so little incentive to work, he thought it a crime in America, where labour was so well paid. An amusing instance of this dislike, that plunged him into a predicament out of which all his courage was required to deliver him, is related of an Irish emigrant who went southward to join his family, and on reaching their locality and inquiring for his brother, was told he was in the fields at work, near some blacks who belonged to a neighbouring plantation.

On Pat's way to him he entered a wood where his attention was attracted by a huge black bear, stretched at his length in its agreeable shade, to which he had wisely retreated to escape the glare of the sun. Paddy's eyes were no sooner fixed on him than all his antipathy was roused. " There's one of 'em," he exclaimed—"one of them lazy blacks, and just as I h'ard say of 'em. Oh, the idle vagabone, skulking away from his day's work, and lying

down here at his aise, when he ought to be 'arning his bread like the honest boys about him." Upon which, walking up to the offender, whose back was turned towards him, he gave him a hearty kick, accompanying it with the popular injunction—"Get out of that, you blackguard!" The bear rolling over and rising slowly with a growl, Pat's description of what followed must be given in his own words :—

"Well, as I'm a man, sir, he was one of the ugliest villins mortal eyes was ever clapped on. He had a head more like a pig, and he was as hairy as a spannel. You might have cut him up into door-mats, and sowld him at a fine profit. Well, when the vagabone turned round, he was scarsly able to sit up—whether he hadn't larnt it among other matters of his neglected edication, I couldn't tell, of coorse—but then he began to grin and growl at me. 'Howld your prate,' says I, 'I don't understhand your dirty language; but jist get up now, and go on before me, and show me where my brother Mick is.' With that, instead of doing what he was bid, the vagabone kem up to me as if he was going to wrastle.

"'Don't dare lay hands on me,' says I, 'you ill-looking thief of the world! kape off now, kape off—and faix, when I come to look at you, it's little you trouble the barber anyhow. Kape off, I say. You won't?—Oh, well, if you're for a wrastle, here's  at you, my black jewel! Hillo—murther! what a squaze!  Let me get a grip o' you, you villin! Where's your waistband?—tare and agers! who's

your tailor? I want to know. Whoop! by the powers, you've nothing on you, I believe, you hairy brute!—don't squaze me so till I get a grip o' you somewhere! Ow! murthur, then—don't choke me! Is it killing me you are? If you don't let me go I'll do for you. I'll sarch for my knife, you villin—you know you're not wrastlin' fair now. Tare and ouns! do you mane to choke me? Here's my knife out—and you'll have it if you squaze me so again.' And as the murtherin' blackguard was persistin', and my last b'reath was going out of me, sure enough I was as good as my word—and there was an end to all his squazing.

"Down he tumbled on the ground, and lay rowled up all of a hape, mighty like a feather bed that's been well punched before they make it. 'Oh, wow, wow,' says I—'I hav'n't hurt you much, I hope, now.' Upon which he gives a grunt. 'Oh, don't say that,' says I, 'I didn't mane to harm you—on'y to onconvanience you a little.'—And then he grunts ag'in. 'I hav'n't killed you, have I?' says I; 'if you're a dead man, only spake out;' but he only rowled over with a growl. 'Oh, bad luck to me!' says I; 'but you'll forgive me before you go? Don't bear malice, if you're going—just give me a grip of your hand; sure, you give it tight enough just now—you squazed me as if you loved me.' But, whisteroo! there was no use talking; out he stratched as stiff as a crutch, and as deaf as a load of granite.

"So off I ran to Mick—and sorrowful enough, as you may suppose, when the first word I had to tell him was to

say I had committed murther. 'Mick,' says I, 'how are you? I have come to deliver myself up to justice.' 'What do you mane by that?' says he. 'I killed one o' your blacks,' says I. 'Tare and ouns!' says he, 'that's worse than murther hereabouts—he's worth 1000 dollars at laste, and his master will sue you for every shillin' of the money; but maybe he ain't dead yet, for the nagers take a dale of killin'.' And we ran back to the wood, when all of a sudden Mick pulls up. 'Howld on a bit,' says he, 'howld on; there's a big villin of a bear we are all afraid of, in these bushes. He robs us of all our pigs, and doesn't care about our shots. He must have as many bullets in his hide as any soger in his cartridge-box.'

"'Oh, never mind the bear,' says I—'let's look to the poor nager.' And at last I sees him, and runs up to him. 'There's the black,' says I, 'I've murthered.' 'The black!' says Mick. 'Why, Larry, don't you know your spacies better? It's the bear that you've been killin'; it's not a murtherer that you are, darlin—but a public benefactor.' And with that he gave me a hug himself, that almost choked me over agin. 'Why,' says he, 'you'll have a bounty; the District will give you twenty dollars for stickin' a knife into that varmint.' 'Well then, sure,' said I, 'I wouldn't ask for anything betther than to kill one every day. I'd put up over my door what the barbers do in Dublin—"Another fine bear slaughtered!"' And sure enough I got the money, and was thanked for my sarvices to boot."

THE IRISH POST-BOY (1835).

IN the Irish post-boy we are not presented with the white-jacketed, silk-hatted, top-booted, and bright-spurred gentleman we are accustomed to in England, as trim as his own horses, and as silent, till he touches his hat to get his fee for driving them. The Irish post-boy, on the contrary, is as scanty in his attire as he is abundant in his intelligence, having always something to tell his passenger of the localities they pass through, as though he took him for a book-maker who was taking notes upon the way. He fulfils a double function—he is guide as well as driver, and his humour often lies as much in what he does as in what he says. He will commence something in this fashion :

“Do you see that house, yer honour, yonder? I suppose you know that’s Mr. d’Arcy’s.” “Yes, I do. Mr. d’Arcy is very rich, I believe?” “Well, sir, maybe he is and maybe he isn’t.” “Why, I thought he was a man of fortune.” “Well, you see, he was purty well off, sir, till he got howld of the property.” “Till he got it! What do you mean?” “Why, sir, when he was *heir* to the property he had great expectations, and so on the strength of that, you

see, he got whatever money he wanted." "Well, and so he ought, when he was heir to £5000 a year." "That's true, yer honour, that's true, sir! But then, you'll understand, he was heir to £5000 a year that was *spint*." "Oh, I see!" "So when he got the property, of coorse the gntleman was ruined."

"Hillo! take care—you were nearly in the ditch then." "Never fear, sir; it's that blackguard mare that is always shyin'! Hurrup!" "How close her ears are cut." "Yis, they are, sir—oh, they're close enough; but nothing will cure the villain." "Cure her! How do you mean?" "Why, sir, I persaved that, whenever she started, she always cocked her ears up, so I cut them off, you see, to make her lave off the trick of startin'; but, bad luck to the vagabone! she's just as bad as ever."

In a particularly dangerous part of the road, with a precipice on one side of you, you observe the post-boy keeps casting an inquiring glance towards his vehicle. "What's the matter?" you inquire; "rather an awkward bit of road here." "Oh, it's nothin', sir; it's a grand prospect." "Yes—of going over. Why, it is some hundred feet to the bottom." "Well, it may be—but look at the prospect, sir; them mountains—oh, they're grand, sir; they beat the world for dignity. You'd never see their likes again, if you was to go over twenty precipusses."

After many other tales and difficulties you reach your journey's end, and then the post-boy, as you have surmised, expects a good gratuity. You give him what you consider

to be a handsome reward of his services, but still he is not contented.

"Sure, your honour," he exclaims, "wouldn't mind another shillin'?"

"No," you reply, "I think I've paid you liberally."

"But you'll consider the way I drove you, sir?"

"Not a pleasant one, by any means."

"And the power of stories I told you?"

"Some of which I have heard before."

"Well, then, give me another shillin', sir, and I'll tell you somethin' which I will undertake to say you never heard before."

"Very good ; then, there's a shilling. Now, what's the story I have never heard?"

"Well, then, of coorse your honour remembers the three miles we came along with the cliff upon one side of us?"

"Remember it?—I shall never forget it!"

"Well, then, you don't know, sir, that I drove you them three miles without a *linch-pin*!"

IT'S MIGHTY IMPROVIN'.

THE Irish peasantry have tales of a parabolic character,—stories which by means of some striking action or circumstance set forth a hearty moral. On hearing such, their usual phrase is—"Oh, it is mighty improvin'." And that too is what Molly Malone, a worthy washerwoman, used to say—and say almost invariably—after hearing a sermon on Sunday. One day, however, her clergyman, who was not quite content with this generality, spoke to her respecting his discourse, and Molly suddenly became what they call in Ireland a little bothered. Nevertheless, she got out of her difficulty with one of those parabolic answers which are such favourites with her class, and which, whilst it completely evaded the question, satisfactorily replied to it.

Rev. Well, Molly, you liked the sermon, you say ?

Mol. Oh yes, your riverence—it was mighty improvin'.

Rev. And what part of it did you like best ?

Mol. Well, sure, sir, I liked every part.

Rev. But I suppose there were some portions of it that you were more struck with than you were with others ?

Mol. In throth, plase your riverence, I don't remember any part exactly, but altogether 'twas mighty improvin'.

Rev. Now, Molly, how could it be improving if you don't remember any part of it?

Mol. Well, your riverence sees that linen I've been washing and dhrying on the hedge there?

Rev. Oh, certainly.

Mol. Wasn't it the soap and wather made the linen clane, sir?

Rev. Of course they did.

Mol. And isn't the linen all the better for it?

Rev. Oh, no doubt of that, Molly.

Mol. But not a dhrop of the soap and wather stays in it. Well, sir, it's the same thing wid me. Not a word o' the sarmint stays in me—I suppose it all *dhries* out o' me—but I'm the better and the claner for it, when it's over, for all that.

DUBLIN PORTERS, CARMEN, AND WAITERS.

ALL these have characteristics which are worthy of a moment's noting. We land at Kingston as her Majesty's mail packet is made fast and is pouring forth her varied crowd of passengers on the jetty. Instantly we have a swarm of porters round us, some with tickets on their arms, and some without—the former the legitimate assistant of the traveller; the latter the poacher, who lays hand on any stray bird he can catch. Between these contending parties, of course, an active war goes on—the one grand in their authority, the other adroit in their devices. An example strikes us instantly. A man without “a number” is walking off with a passenger's luggage. “Stop!” cries out a ticket man; “you have no business with that jintleman.” “No business!” exclaims the forager. “Well, then, sure it's a pleasure I have in sarving him.” “Stop, I say!” shouts his antagonist; “you know you've got no number.” “No number, do you say?—but I have, tho'. Sure my number is nine, barrin' a *tail* to it.”

Next you are laid hold of by a crowd of carmen “Here's the car, your honour—that's the beauty.” “Don't

belave him," cries his rival; "he'll break down, sir. Look at his springs! ain't they tied up with a piece of rope?" "Well," replies the first one, "we'll go the faster for all that—won't we have the spring ti(e)de with us?" The traveller is laid hold of by both arms and pulled about in all directions, while half of his luggage is on one car, and half is jerked on the other, he doubting which he will be permitted to go upon himself, when the conflict suddenly subsides into a mysterious consultation. "Done!" cries one of the carmen; "Done!" says the other, and they plunge their hand into their pockets.

"What are you about?" shouts the bewildered passenger. "We're just goin' to toss for you, sir;" and they literally cry, "Heads or tails?" for who shall have the honour of his honour's company. The man of the broken springs loses; but with infinite good-humour he transfers the luggage to the car of the winner, helps the traveller to his seat,—when, with a mischievous twinkle in his eye, he says, "You lost me, sir" (he never says, "I have lost *you*"). "I'm sorry you lost me, for you won't be able to ate your breakfast when you get to your howtell." "Why not?" demands the traveller. "You'll get such a jolting with them strong springs, sir, they'll shake every tooth out of your head."

Other instances are related of the humour and shrewdness of these gentry. A stranger on one occasion asked a car-driver to set him down at a certain address in Dublin, which was only round an adjacent corner, and when Pat

had brought him to the spot, the gentleman complained of it as an imposition. "You might have pointed out the place to me." "Pointed it out!" exclaimed Pat. "Is it a finger-post you'd make of me? Sure, then, you might have paid me for my pointing, and left me where you found me."—To return, however, to our traveller. He is driven to an hotel, and despite the prediction of the rival car-driver, he retains his powers of mastication, and readily calls for breakfast. Here another national characteristic comes out in the person of the waiter. He does not move about like other waiters, formal and smooth as his own napkin, absorbed in the point of what you'll take next, and only muttering the "Yes, sir," or "No, sir," of a London place of entertainment. He gives you politics with the hot water, and flattery with the buttered rolls.

"You look wonderful well, sir, after the say-sickness. Some gentlemen looks as yellow as lemons, and maybe twice as sour. Do you like green or black tay, sir? They say the tays will rise, sir, since the French went to war with Moroca. Great meeting to-day in Dublin, sir. I suppose you are going to attind it; perhaps you mane to spake, sir." "No, indeed I don't." "Oh, I'm sorry for that—you've such a spaking face, sir." "Have you any soda-water?" "We have, sir." "Is it good?" "'Pon my honour, I don't know, sir—I never dhrink it myself."

The wonderful composure of some of these persons, though sometimes very irritating, is certainly very laughable. I once learnt what was the judicious rule of a Galway waiter

for taking liberties. I had left my note-book on my breakfast table while I went for some letters that were in my bedroom, and on my return I saw this personage quietly inspecting my private records. On my reproving with some emphasis the impertinence he had been guilty of, he answered with the greatest calmness—"Oh, I beg your pardon, sir; I did not think you were in the room, or I wouldn't have thought of doing it."—Their excuses for table deficiencies are at times diverting enough. "Bring me a hot plate, waiter!—the beef is good, but the plates are cold." "The hot plates is not come in yet, sir." "Well, get them in, sir." "I mane, sir, they are not in saison: hot plates comes in in October and goes out in May."—On another occasion a man asks for currant jelly to his haunch of mutton. "Beg your pardon, sir, the jelly is gone; but I can get you some beautiful lobster sauce."

PADDY AT SEA.

IT has been the fashion to consider the Irishman rather as a soldier than a sailor, and yet the sea seems to offer something congenial to the Hibernian spirit. Its dark depths—its flashes of light—its terrible energy—its sportive spray—its striking alternations of frowning storm and smiling calm—reflect the Irishman so vividly, that one would think it his peculiar element.

Many, however, have denied this, and have even gone so far as to say that the Irish make bad sailors, though one of England's greatest admirals, Nelson's co-mate, the noble Collingwood, bears direct testimony to the contrary. In one of his letters to an officer who superintended the manning of his ships, he says—"Do not send me any lubbers; but, if you can, get me some more of those Irish lads you sent me—they were all fine fellows, and are now top-men, every one of them." The Irish have a right by national descent to be good sailors. The Phœnicians, I need not say, were the great seamen of antiquity, and that the Irish may claim them as progenitors is a fact that has been long established. The Irish buildings, arms, and language are all among its clearest evidences.

Pat's fitness for the sea might further be illustrated by the well-known skill and courage of the numerous fishermen and pilots who toil around his rocky shores, and pursue their avocations in the most tempestuous and dangerous weather. I am tempted, however, at this moment, rather to fall in with the popular notion, and recount the experience of an honest Irishman whose sympathies, as will be seen, lay more with the land than with the water, and whose extreme innocence of the latter resembled that of a peasant, who was observed crossing a ferry constantly, without any apparent object; and, on being asked the reason, said he was shortly going to emigrate, and so took the ferry every morning "just to practise the say-sickness."

Jimmy Hoy was a County Cork boy, who made one in the great exodus that was occasioned by the famine. Jimmy was not ashamed of his name—he boasted that it was "always ould and respectable;" that there "was cows in the family wanst;" "and that a pig was niver a stranger to them, nor a rasher of bacon at Aisther." Misfortune, however, had ground them down, as it had done a thousand others, to indigence, leaving at last only Jemmy and his old mother in existence; and when he found that existence was daily a harder thing to support, he turned his face to the west, and induced his mother, whom he loved with true Irish warmth, to accompany him. Accordingly, selling off all they possessed, and making the best of their way to Cork, where a fleet of emigrant ships

were loading, it so happened that in the hurry and excitement of the time, and amidst the crowd of people they encountered, they unluckily got separated, and went on board of different vessels—an error that Jimmy only discovered when his own had hoisted anchor and was standing out to sea. From this point it will be best to allow our friend to speak for himself.

“So I scrambled, you see, on board, and the minit my fut was under me—‘Is my mother here?’ says I. With that a scowlin’ fellow that was haulin’ in a rope that samed to have no end to it, turns to me and tells me I might go to—well, I won’t say where. ‘Not before you, sir,’ says I; ‘after you is manners,’ making him a bow; and so I cries out and again, ‘Plase, is my mother here aboard of ye?’ and then as no one chose to answer me I ran about to look for her, on all the flures they call the decks, though the people stood as thick as a drove of cattle in an alley, and scrouging and roaring like that same, and I’d to squaze myself betwixt ’em from one flure to another; but not a squint of her could I ketch, sir, nor of any one as know’d her,—and so at last, when I kem back again, and was tearin’ round the upper flure, plump I runs into the stomach of a grand burly man at the back, with a red face and a big nose, and a gowld band about his cap—and who should he be but the Capt’n.

“‘Who the d—l are you?’ says he, pumping up all the brath I had left him. ‘I axes your honour’s pardon,’ says I; ‘my name is Jimmy Hoy, and I was looking for my mother.’

“‘And did you take me for your mother, you omad-haun?’ says he. ‘Oh, not a bit,’ says I, ‘sir; for if I had, you’d have found it out—you’d have got a hug that would have set you scrambling. And so now, perhaps, you’ll tell me, sir, if my mother is aboard of ye?’

“‘How should I know?’ he roars out, for now his brath was coming back, and he was lookin’ mighty fierce. ‘And what brings you here at all, you lubberly son of a sea-calf?’ ‘Sure, sir,’ says I, ‘I—I’m going to Ameriky; and as to my father, you’re mistaken—he was no say baste at all, but Dennis Hoy, a County Cork man, and——’

“‘I don’t remember you,’ says he; ‘you hav’n’t paid your passage.’ ‘Axing your pardon,’ says I, ‘but I have, tho’. I paid it an hour ago, on shore, sir.’ ‘But you didn’t pay it to me,’ says he. ‘Why, of coorse not,’ says I, ‘sir. You wouldn’t have me pay it twice, would you?’

“‘Well, if you hav’n’t paid it to me,’ says he, ‘you hav’n’t paid it at all; so hand out your money, if you’re going to make the voyage in this ship.’ ‘By my faith, sir,’ I said, ‘I can’t,—and, saving your presence, if I could I wouldn’t, seein’ I’ve done that same already. But, sure, I don’t want to be intruding; if I’ve got into the wrong ship, you’ve only got to stop her till you put me aboard of the right one.’

“‘Well, that’s a capital joke,’ says he. ‘Oh, it’s not joking that I am,’ says I, ‘for I’m only axin’ you what’s fair, sir—for then, you sec, I’d find my mother, and my mind would be at aise.’

“‘You and your mother may go to Chiny,’ the Capt’n bellows out—growing as red as any turkey-cock, and stamping his fut upon the flure till you’d have thought he’d drive it through it. ‘Axin’ your pardon again,’ says I, ‘sir, we’re goin’ to Ameriky,—and as for Chiny, all I know about it is what I’ve seen upon a plate, and——’

“‘Howld your jaw,’ says he, ‘you vagabone, and pay your passige money at wanst.’ ‘I paid it wanst,’ says I, ‘sir, and I’d want a pocket as big as your ship to go on paying it for iver.’

“‘You swindlin’ Irish scamp!’ says he, ‘don’t provoke me, or I will be the death of you;’ and then all of a sudden he got quiet—oh, so terrible quiet, sir, and with such a hard look about his eyes that, to say the truth, he frekened me. ‘See now, my buck,’ says he,—‘since you can’t pay your passige, you shall work your passige.’ ‘Work it, sir?’ says I. ‘Oh, I would, and willin’,—if I only knowed the way.’ ‘Oh,’ says he, with a wicked wink at me, ‘we’ll soon tache you that; we’ve a turn here for instructhin’ people that want to get their voyage for nothin’.’ And with that he put his hand to the side of his mouth, and give a whistle that would split a flag, and up runs to him a hairy villin that was enough to scare a herd of oxen, if he’d come upon ’em onawares.

“‘Tare-all,’ says he, ‘just take this chap in hand and tache him how to work his passige. Don’t spare him—do you hear now?’ ‘Aye, aye, sir,’ growled out Tare-all, giving me a nod, and howlding up his finger as much as to say—‘You’ll come this way.’

"And so after him I wint, sir; and sad enough, as you may suppose—not thinking of myself, but what had become of my poor owld mother. After him I wint, to learn how I was to work my passige over—and by my throth, sir, it was the hardest thing I'd ever had to larn as yet. Were you ever aboard a ship, sir?—Oh, then sure it must have bothered you to hear the puzzlin' names they've got there. Don't they always make a woman of her? A ship's a 'she,' sir, you will remimber,—and don't they talk about her *waist* to you—and, by my faith, it's not a small one—and tell you sometimes 'she's in stays,' too, tho' I can't say I ever seen 'em. Though, to be sure, they say besides that she's often mighty hard to manage—and that's like a woman sartainly.

"Then see the names they give to a rope, sir. First it is a hawser; then it's a painter—though what it paints I never knowed, sir; then it's a rattlin,—but that it's always doin'; and then it's the shrouds,—which manes, I suppose, that the poor passengers always get into them when the ship is going to the bottom. At the same time they're always agraable to tache you what it's made of—they'll give you a taste of a rope's end a good deal sooner than a glass of whiskey. And what is it like? perhaps you'll ask. Work your passige out to Ameriky, and you'll learn it fast enough. Then they're so ignorant they don't know their right hand from their left. It's all starboord or larboord with them, though, by my throth, as every night I'd got to slape upon the flure, I found it mighty hard boord.

"The sailors, you see, are snug enough. They've got what they call their hammicks—little beds tied up to hooks that they swing about in at their aise; and it was after I'd been looking at them for a night or two in the deepest admiration, that I says to myself, says I, 'Why wouldn't I be making a little hammick for myself, to take a swing in like the rest, and not be lying here on the bare boords like a dumb baste in an outhouse?' And so the next day, looking round me, what should I see but a hape of canvas that no one seemed to care about; so I cut out of it a yard or two just to make the bed I wanted, and that done, says I, 'Jimmy Hoy, you'll slape to-night as snug as a cat in a blanket, anyhow,'—but I didn't for all that.

"I hadn't turned in half-an-hour when one of the crew crapes up to me—Bob Hobbs, sir, was his name,—and says he to me, 'Jimmy Hoy,' says he, 'it's mortal tired I am with my day's work, and the night before; not a wink of slape I've had,' says he, 'for this blessed eight-and-forty hours, so be a good fellow, Jimmy, now, and take my dooty for to-night.' Well, not liking to be ill-natured, though I didn't care much for the fellow, I tould him that I would, and so I slips out of my new bed, and mighty quick, sir, he slips into it, and up I goes on deck, to take his place on the look-out.

"And thin ther kem on such a night, sir,—oh, murther! you'd have thought the divel himself was out at say, and was taking his divarshun—blowing, hailin', and rainin' for six mortal hours and more—and pitchin' the oushen up

into the sky, as if he was makin' haycocks. I thought the poor ship would have gone crazy. She jumped and rowled about as if her thratement was past endoorin'. Sure, if I had bargained for a bad night I couldn't have got a betther. Well, sir, the mornin' kem at last, and found me as well pickled as any herrin' in Cork harbour, and I was crawlin' off to my hammick, just to get a little slape and dry myself, when up comes the Capt'n in a tearin' rage, and says he—

“‘You're a pretty blackguard, ain't you now?’ ‘Not to my knowledge, sir,’ says I. ‘Your knowledge, indeed, you vagabone!’ ‘Why, what is it I done?’ says I. ‘Done?’ says he, ‘you villin—when you're upsettin' the ship's discipline! You took Bob Hobbs's watch last night.’

“‘Tuk what?’ says I. ‘His watch, sir.’ ‘Oh, murther, Capt'n!’ says I. ‘Would you rob a poor boy of his charakter?’ ‘I say you did, you rascal,’ says he. ‘But I didn't, sir,’ says I. ‘I never took Bob Hobbs's watch, nor the watch of any other man—or woman ayther. I would scorn the dirty action—for I was rared in honest principles, and 'twas considered in my schoolin'. More be token, sir, I couldn't, for Bob Hobbs tould me himself that he had pawned his watch in Cork before he ever kem aboard.’

“‘You stupid rascal!’ he cried out, ‘don't you know the manin' of what I say to you? but I'll make you understand me presently—if you've got no brains, you've got a back.’ And what do you think he meant by that, sir? The ould tiger was goin' to flog me—but, luckily for me, you see

the storm was gettin' worse. One of the sails was split in halves, and another was torn away entirely; so the Capt'n, divil thank him! had to think about the ship, and not to be indulgin' his dirty vingeance upon me. So he roars out mighty loud, 'Set the storm jib there!' and half the crew run up the riggin' as quick as a crowd of monkeys, when—whisteroo!—would you belave it, sir? by the book in my pocket, if that same jib wasn't the very piece of canvas that I cut the two yards out of, jist to make myself a bed,—and the minit the Capt'n spied it he roars out agin like thunder, 'Who the d—l cut out that?'

"'Twas I, sir,' says I, 'but I only tuk two yards of it.'

"'Give him a dozen,' says the Capt'n.

"'Thank you, sir,' says I, 'but the two is quite enough for me.'

"And what do you think the villin meant by givin' me a dozen?—it was lashes that he meant, sir. Not contint with the rope's end I'd had already—though there was no end to it at all—he towled the hands to lay howld on me, and tie me to the mast,—but before the miscreant could plaze himself, there kem a thunderin' crack right overhead, and down kem hapes of sticks and canvas—and the Capt'n bellows out agin, 'Clare the wrack! clare the wrack!—we'll sarve this lubber out directly.'

"Well, I was willin' to wait, sir—and sure they'd enough to do. I thought at first it was all over with us, and the ship would be capsizin'—and they had scarcely got her to rights a bit, and my mind was getting aisy, when

I hard a voice callin' in the distance, 'Jip a Hoy! Jim a Hoy!' and I was lost in wonder entirely—'for who knows me,' says I, 'or cares for me, in the middle of the great Atlantic oushen? Is it guardian angels that's taking pity on me, and coming here to save me from a lashing?' So I tried hard to loose myself, and looking round, what did I see but a ship sailing towards us, and the voice that know'd me kem'd from that, and I h'ard it cry again—'Jip a Hoy! Jim a Hoy!' 'Here I am,' says I; 'here's the man you're wantin'.'

'Howld your jaw!' says the Capt'n. 'Why, isn't it me they're spakin' to?' says I—'and isn't it civil in me to answer 'em? Is my mother got aboard of ye?' 'Bad luck to you and your mother! will you be quiet?' says the Capt'n. 'No, I won't,' says I. 'Why wouldn't I answer when I'm spoke to?' And with that the voice kem again—'Jip a Hoy! Jim a Hoy!' 'Here I am,' says I agin—'any news, plaze, of my mother?'

"And with that the Capt'n took a spakin' trumpet just to put me down, sir—to kape me from bein' h'ard; oh, I could see that plain enough—so I roared out louder than ever, 'Here's the man you're wantin';' but the trumpet give him the advantage of me. I couldn't make out what he said at first, it was such a bellowing he kep up; but at last I h'ard him roar, 'Carried away fore-yard.'

"'Don't be tellin' lies of me,' says I; 'it's only two yards that I tuk. Just now you said I tuk a watch, and now it's four yards I've been staling. Oh, Capt'n, but it's

cruel of you to ruin my charakter as you're doing, and in hearin' of the ship too—and my mother perhaps aboard of her.'

"And then the voice kem from the ship agin—'Where are ye bound to?'

"'I'm bound to the mast,' says I, 'and the Capt'n is going to murther me.'

"'Will you howld your tongue, you rascal?' says the Capt'n, looking pistols at me. 'No, I won't,' says I; 'I'll expose you to the whole world for the shameful way you're thrating me.'

"Well, we soon lost sight of the ship; but the storm was as bad as iver, and only one good kem of it—they were too busy with the danger to be amusin' themselves with me. So I got myself loose at last,—and then, seeing what a way they were in, I hadn't the heart to desart them, notwithstandin' my bad usage. 'No,' says I, 'I'll be ginerous, and stand by them like a man.' So I goes up to the Capt'n, and overlookin' all he'd done, says I to him, quite kindly, 'Capt'n, is there anythin' I can do for you?'

"'Kape out of my way, you vagabone, or I shall be tempted to do for you!' says he. And with that he made a kick at me as bad as a horse stung in a sand-pit; but I made allowance for the throuble he was in, and didn't mind his timper.

"All this time I hard the sailors saying something about the anchor, and at last the Capt'n was struck with

a notion, and shouts out to them about me, 'Where's the best bower?'

" 'Here he is,' says I, sir, running up to him agin, and making a low bow at the same time. 'I'm the best Bower on board, sir, for my mother, when I was at school, paid tuppence a week extra to have me taught manners.'

" 'I wish your neck was broke,' said he, 'you vagabone!' making another terrible kick at me in return for all my kindness to him; and then kem up the Bos'n, and the Capt'n says to him, says he, 'Have you let go now?' 'Aye, aye, sir,' answers Hairey-face,—and I may just make the remark that's all he ever did answer, the whole way acrost the oushen.

" 'Then, I think,' says the Capt'n, 'we may depind on the best bower.' 'Oh, you may do that,' says I, 'sir; you may depind on *me* with sartainty.' 'Take that fellow out of my sight,' said he, 'if you don't want me to murder him;' so at that I walks away with Hairey-face to the other end of the ship, where I hear the sailors saying 'the anchor was coming home,' and that the Capt'n ought to know it.

" 'He ought, you say,' says I; 'then of coorse I'll go and tell him, if it's only to show him I bear no malice, and I'm still willin' to be useful.' Upon which I runs back to him and says I, 'Capt'n, the anchor's coming home.'

" 'Tunder and ouns!' says he.

" 'Don't be angry, Capt'n,' says I,—'small blame to it for comin' home on such a night as this. Who'd stay out, sir, that could help it?'

"Upon which Hairy-face runs up, and the Capt'n then cries out to him, 'Is this thrue I hear—is the anchor coming home?'

"'Aye, aye, sir,' growls out Hairy-face.

"'Then we must cut and run,' says he; 'but we must try and save the anchor, so throw over the buoy.'

"Well, now, I must just stop to tell you that of all the mischievous little blackguards that ever desarved drowning, the cabin-boy was him, sir. And so, still wishing to be useful, notwithstanding all their bad thratement of me, I ran off to ketch the villin; but the little vagabone was so nimble, I couldn't at all lay howld of him; howsomever, under the sarcumstances, I did the best I could, and then I ran back to the Capt'n.

"'Is the buoy overboard?' says he.

"'Faith, then, I am sorry to say,' says I, 'Capt'n, the boy's not overboard, for the young d—I run so fast I couldn't clap a hand on him, but the next best thing to be done, I did. I threw over the black cook—and that will lighten the ship beautifully.'

"'Threw overboard the cook, you murderin' villin!' roared the Capt'n. 'You've saved me the job of doing it; you'll be hanged, thank heaven, at last.'

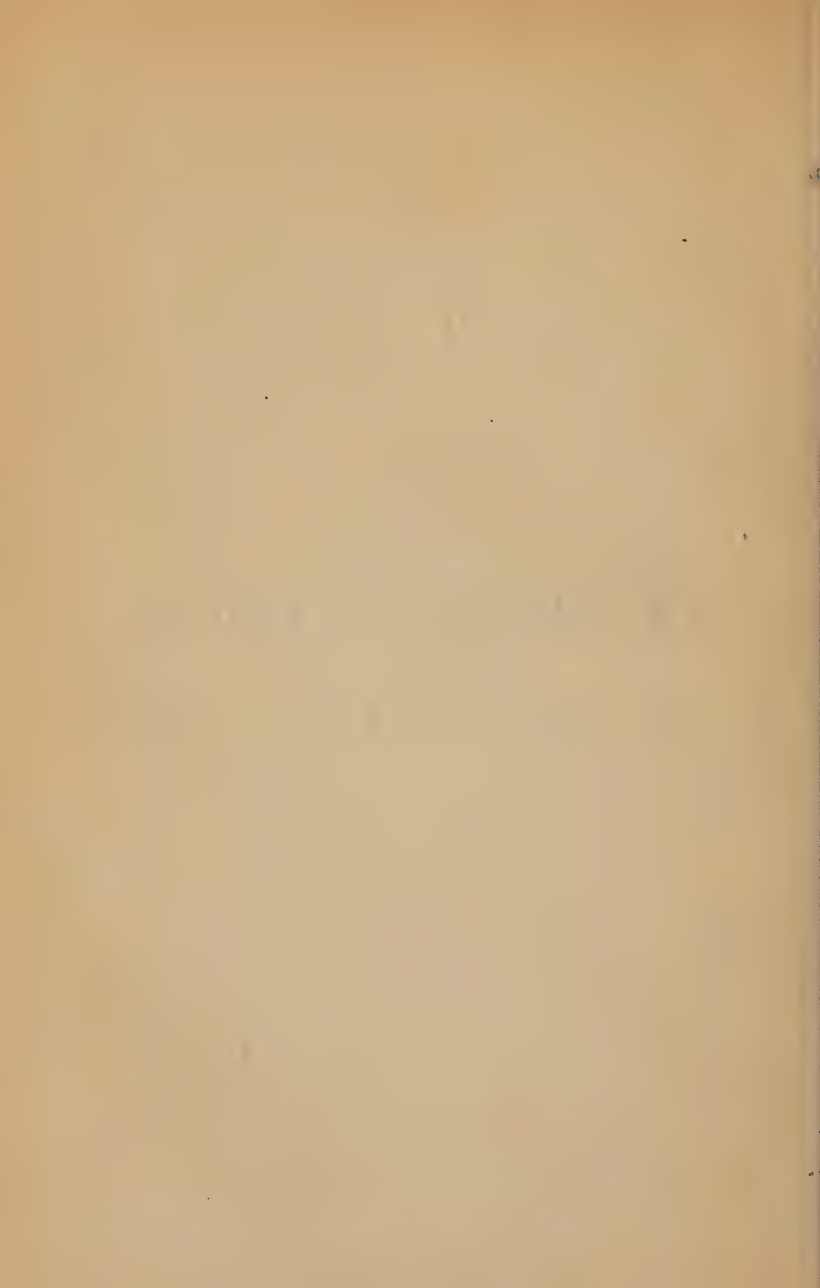
"But hanged I wasn't, I beg to say, for, in the confusion of the night, it was a big tar barrel I threw overboard instid of the black cook, that same being much of his own size and colour.

"Well, to make a long story short, sir, in spite of the

storm and all our danger, we got to Ameriky at last, when the Capt'n felt so happy, that he gave up his anymosity and the vingeance he vowed ag'inst me, and only laughed at the mistakes I'd made in turnin' my hand to the Say sarvice. And, what's more, when we reached New York, sir, who should I find but my ould mother, that had got in a week before me, in the ship I ought to have come in, and that had had no storm at all—but mine's the bad luck of the Hoys, sir. And so, when I was on dhry land agin, I took a solemn oath, sir, that I'd niver work my passage any more across the Atlantic: and, by my sowl, if you're a wise man, I think you'll do the same."



AMERICAN SKETCHES.



THE BACKWOODSMAN.

THE old backwoodsman of America was the pioneer of her civilization, though little did he know it. The ship is not more unconscious of the track she leaves behind her, than the backwoodsman was of the consequences which were to arise from his great daring. He became an explorer from a courageous temperament, and a love of freedom and adventure. The tame, roundabout course of civilized (or demi-civilized) life revolted him, and it was not to facilitate its growth, but to escape from its restraint, that he went on in advance—that he took to the woods where he could be free, could be self-reliant, and could be alone.

Some fine morning he left the “settlement” with his broad axe slung behind him, his knapsack containing some raiment and a small stock of provisions, his hunting knife in his belt, and a store of powder and lead in his pockets,—carrying his rifle with a courageous confidence that in *that* he had the means of sustaining life or defending it. Armed with that, flying game or advancing foe were pretty much the same to him—he was ready for them both.

For miles and miles he left behind him the last verge

of civilization ; he plunged into the tangled forest—the “wilderness” as he well called it—and it was many a long day before he could hit on a place to rear a hut in. Wood, as he wants it, falls before his axe,—food is within easy reach of his rifle. In what a romantic position he is placed ! The solitude of the primeval forest falls around him like a curtain—he is alone with Nature, face to face, till all her lineaments and signs and tokens are as familiar to him as a book. He reads her better than he could a book. He loves that noble mistress that gives him everything he wants, and asks for nothing in return : he can do what he likes, and she reproofs not. What does he care for society ? he is well rid of it. Ha ! what sound is that of something crashing through the under-bush ? ’Tis a bear ! Does he retreat, or wish for help ? Oh no ; he feels he is more than a match for the huge brute, at which he levels. What mark is that in the grass he scrutinizes so carefully ? It is the trail of an Indian foe. Does he tremble ? Out on the thought ! it only warms his blood with greater eagerness. He watches, too, and creeps and dodges through brake, and briar, and oaks vine-tangled, and the Red-man falls a victim to the sure shot of the Pale-face. The native savage fears him at last, and he will beat the Redskins with odds against him.

What courage and adventure were compassed in all this ! In the olden days of romance there was much of lofty daring, doubtless,—but then the knight tilted in the presence of fair dames and royal dignities, and from the

battle in which he wore his lady's glove upon his crest, he knew that smiles and triumph, the praise of courts, and the songs of minstrels, awaited his return ; but in the case of the backwoodsman, where was his reward for all his daring ? It lay simply in success, and the consciousness that his manly heart was proof against all fear.

Before such hardy adventurers savage life fell slowly back, and civilization crept surely after them. They were the pioneers of progress,—and, if it is the destiny of barbarism to yield everywhere to skill and knowledge, we feel less pity at the doom that overtook the Western Red-men when we remember that, of all the aborigines which history refers to, they showed themselves the most merciless, the most treacherous and unimprovable.

The woodman followed the backwoodsman, and became an equal benefactor. Whilst the one opened up the track to future and thriving settlements, the other cleared the space for them. They were like theory and practice, discovery and application. They were severally the forerunner and the founder of their country's greatness. To the woodman, also, it must be said, America owes a debt of gratitude. Who can behold what she is now and not look back with admiration on the hardihood of those who first redeemed her from the wilderness,—who were the earliest to invade the forest, and win from the domain of solitude clear space for busy city and widespread teeming fields ?

Still, perhaps, it must be owned that it is only those

who have seen a "clearing,"—who have counted the stumps of primeval trees that are to be found in a single acre, that can do justice to the resolute energy of the men who laid it bare. One should know the time and toil required to fell a single tree, in order to measure the courage it needed to face, and the indomitable will to conquer, the obstructions of a whole country. It makes us respect our kind the more, to look back on all this achievement. We say with honourable pride, "They were our fellow-men who did this;" and the thought braces up our energies to be doing something ourselves, and, whatever the cost or burden to us, doing what duty demands.

In a dreamy mood I have sometimes imagined the first woodman at his work, with his clenched hand and earnest eye, measuring the power and number of the host he was going to attack, and some stately tree of the forest—the chieftain of the wood—as if sentient of his purpose, throwing out his gnarled arms as though to threaten or defy him. The attack is commenced—the heavy stroke of the axe goes ringing through the forest, and wild creatures come from their coverts to gaze on the invader.

The eagle sails down from his eyry—and sweeps so close to the woodman, that the latter can hear the rush of his wings through the silence which was once the eagle's own, but now is his no longer. The panther and wild cat gleam with fiery eyes upon him,—the snake hisses his hatred, or rattles his revengefulness;—but the hand that strikes is heedless of them all. The axe repeats its blows;

the wound grows wider and wider ; the assaulted monarch of the woods, whose leafy crown is that of centuries, soon bends submissive to his fate—and, headlong as he falls, wakes the solitude with the loud prophecy of the forest's doom, and man's dominion.

America, in her flag, ought to have the axe emblazoned, for it was the first founder of her greatness. It would be a far fitter emblem of her historic glory than the eagle. The bird refers to her state of savageness, and if it also refers to her martial honour, it is to the triumph and dominion won by a savage cost of blood and treasure. But the axe denotes her industry—the greater honour of her labour, which won the dominion of the wood in order to erect her boundless empire.

LAUREL HILL.

THE cemetery so called in the vicinity of Philadelphia is, both in position and arrangement, one of the most beautiful in existence. Nobly situated on a rising ground which overhangs the Schuylkill river, you catch glimpses of that stream through vistas of the superb trees which abound here, and heighten so much the picturesqueness of the spot. Sometimes a distant reach reflects the sparkling sunlight through the leafy avenues that surround the graves with their cool and befitting shadows; occasionally you look down from the overhanging terraces into which the river bank is cut, viewing the stream delightedly through a screen of luxurious foliage. You stand upon some salient point among the tops of trees that grow beneath you,—the breeze murmurs through the branches with a sighing cadence over the dead,—and, perchance, some falling leaves lighting on the water, and swept away by it, are looked upon at such a moment as no inappropriate emblems of withering life and the tide of time.

The tombs at Laurel Hill are generally well sculptured and in good taste, and the attention paid to the grounds in freeing them from noxious weeds, as well as in pre-

serving their turf and pathways, heightens greatly their natural charm. This caring for the garden of the dead softens the feeling of awe, and even repulsion, which chills us on entering so many a graveyard in England, where the stark and staring flagstones are half smothered in the clutches of a rank vegetation. Here, on the contrary, a sense of beauty is felt to be no unfitting companion of the sacredness which rests on the narrow recess of our last sleep. Roses and other flowers abound here, soothing the senses with their graceful forms, their glowing colours, and their sweet perfume. They seem to fulfil a higher destiny than in the gardens of the living—the new and odorous life which they exhibit amidst decay, suggests that after and better life wherein decay shall not be known. We can look on them, indeed, as the mute executors of affection, twining round the tomb with a faithful tenderness, which almost seems to speak. Would you pluck a rose from such a grave? No, stranger, no; disturb not its sweet duty,—break not the bond of its companionship. Only those who loved the one that sleeps beneath may gather a memorial, which becomes to them almost a communion of their spirits.

Several of the inscriptions on the tombs were very singular and touching. One had merely this brief tenderness—"Love's last gift." Another had a simplicity still greater and more affecting—"A mother to her child," shutting up in the mother's heart the whole history and secret of, perhaps, her only joy on earth. A third had a

kindred character, suggesting the long borne sadness of another untold story—"Think of me as a wanderer who has at last found a resting-place."

Among the visitors to these grounds I could not help being struck with a lovely girl who was walking alone here and drooping her gentle eyes on the resting-places of the departed. She was a perfect specimen of American beauty. With its prevailing slightness of form, there was sufficient roundness to give it grace; her height was a little above the medium, whilst her erect carriage and even walk betokened her healthful and good proportion. Her face was not unworthy of her bearing. The finely pencilled brow,—the soft blue eye beaming under its long lashes with equal intelligence and kindness,—the delicate outline of nose, gently dilating as she breathed, completed their attractions in a mouth which a painter or a sculptor would have acknowledged as a model.

My admiration, however, I confess, was tempered with the thought of such beauty's evanescence. Nowhere, need I say, as in America, is female loveliness so transient. The blossom scarcely becomes a flower before it has reached the time to wither. Whether it is in the race or in the climate, the mode of living or the want of exercise, the pitiless destiny of American beauty is a fact not to be disputed. I could not avoid applying this reflection to the beautiful girl I saw before me, contrasting so greatly, as she did at the moment, in all her life and grace and freshness, with the sad repose that spread about her.

The monument of Commodore Hull is among those of the greatest note here, and, considering his brave and estimable nature, it is no wonder that his countrymen cherish so generally his memory. He commanded the "Constitution" frigate in that desperate action with the "Guerrier,"—the first of the war of 1812, when England, almost for the first time, met with a foe who could defy her flag. I heard an interesting anecdote relating to that affair. Commodore Hull and the commander of the "Guerrier," Captain Dacres, were acquainted before the war, and their ships happening to lie together in the Delaware, the captains met at a party, and had some conversation in regard to the merits of their respective navies. Professional pride operating on both, led them from generalities to particulars, and at last to speak of what would happen if, in event of war, their ships should come into collision.

Hull was very lively and good-humoured—a fact of which the various portraits of him are sufficiently indicative, and he laughingly said to the English captain, "Take care of that ship of yours if ever I catch her in the 'Constitution.'" Captain Dacres laughed in return, and offered a handsome bet that, if ever they did meet as antagonists, his friend would find out his mistake. Hull refused a money wager, but ventured to stake on the issue—a hat. Years after this, the conjectured encounter did occur; and when, after a desperate fight, in which the English frigate only struck when she had become a wreck

upon the water, Captain Dacres came on board the "Constitution" and offered his sword to Hull, who was waiting to shake hands with him—"No, no," said Hull, "I will not take a sword from one who knows so well how to use it,—but—I'll trouble you for *that hat!*"

NEW YEAR'S DAY IN NEW YORK.

NEW YEAR'S DAY in New York is kept as a high festival, after the manner in which the French keep their well-known *Four de l'An* ; but the institution of this festival is of Dutch origin, not French. On this day you must visit all the friends you have in the city, or you are supposed to hold them lightly, and in a large circle of acquaintance this is no inconsiderable work. Your visiting must be done systematically, or it would never be done at all. You must range addresses in their localities, and make your calls in such regular order that time and space may be economized. This duty of visiting devolves on all the gentlemen—the ladies staying at home to be the recipients of the visits. At noon on the day in question, the lady of the house must be in her drawing-room, and always in her best costume ; and her sisters, daughters, nieces, or other lady relatives, must be her assistants in doing the honours. A table is handsomely furnished with plate, and glass, and china, and a magnificent bowl of punch is seen to occupy the centre, well flanked by various wines, and baskets of cakes and sweetmeats.

These are handed to the visitors by servants, though sometimes a favoured friend is assisted to his nectar by the hostess herself, or the fair hand of some pretty relative, and health and prosperity for the year to come are drank in flowing cups,—so that by the time a man gets home, he finds himself possessed of little appetite for dinner, and still less for his wine—jovial Bacchus having received quite enough worship for one morning. I saw a great many of such assemblages of kindly-wishing friends on the New Year's Day I spent in this city, and all of them exhibited a flow of sympathy that was as inexhaustible as their good wine and their good punch. Jokes were as blithely cracked as biscuits, and the rattle of merriment, as well as of the door-knocker, created a whirl of sound and movement extremely exciting and enjoyable.

Each drawing-room was crowded as though it were an evening's grand assembly, instead of a morning's friendly ceremony, and so rapidly did guest succeed guest in the stream of visitors, that you were scarcely seated in one place before it was time to hurry to another. Often you would meet the same faces at different houses during the day, and find yourself nodding to some one over another china punch-bowl, whom you had similarly saluted elsewhere some three or four hours before. Thus the time went on till six, and I don't think I ever remember a harder or a pleasanter day's work. Neither do I remember anywhere or at any time a day that was more lovely. The sky of a bright blue, slightly speckled with white clouds,—

the air soft and balmy and warm, even as an English June—so warm, in fact, that the windows were all open in all the houses I visited, and the temperature if anything was higher than was pleasant.

But now mark the change. For three days the weather continued nearly as agreeable as this. On the 6th, about three o'clock, the barometer suddenly fell; at five it blew a gale of wind which continued until nine, then as suddenly it stopped—stopped as rapidly as one might stop a stream of gas issuing from a pipe—and with a sudden stillness came a stinging cold. The winter had set in. When I crossed the Hudson the next morning at seven (within ten hours), the docks were covered with ice, and the shipping festooned with icicles. I travelled that day to Philadelphia, where winter had also commenced his reign. I shall never forget the piercing cold as I crossed the Delaware on a ferry-boat.

A thickly lined great-coat, and over that the close mufflings of a comfortable Scotch plaid, seemed the thinnest of protections: the stinging shafts from the bow of winter went through them as though they had been but muslin. The city of Philadelphia was one mass of frozen snow. The black population, so much more numerous here than further north, looked blacker than usual by the contrast, and the white wharf seemed like a snow-field covered suddenly with crows—the likeness being greatly increased by the jabber of the negroes, as noisy and nearly as unintelligible as that of their feathered images, whilst

they propose to "Massa" coaches, cabs, or portorage, and thrust hotel cards into your hands,—which hotels, you imagine, can be nothing else than rookeries, from the looks and sounds of those about you.

HOTEL COMFORTS (1846).

NEVER shall I forget the din with which I was aroused on the first morning it was my happiness to open my eyes in America. I half jumped out of bed at the hotel, wildly exclaiming, "What has happened? If the end of the world has not arrived, at least it must be that of the house. What can warrant such an uproar?" After the first dozen questions which thought can so marvellously suggest and answer in a second, the solution of the problem came. It was a gong—not emitting those full melodious tones of which that instrument is capable, but thrashed by short, hard blows into a jarring nerve-destroying clang, as if all the tin kettles in the world were being played in concert.

I clenched my fist with an intuitive desire to beat whoever was the beater, but on second thoughts I felt my hands were better employed in shielding my ears from the infliction. What had happened? I asked again. Had the Emperor of China arrived, and so it was thought fit to honour him with his own especial music? But if so, it was nothing to me: I was not his subject, and I only wanted to sleep. And so, with the determination one can assume when bent on slumber, I drove my head again

into the pillow, and—blest with good nerves—was soon at rest.

Brief, however, was the enjoyment, for again the gong awoke me, less astonished than before, but infinitely more enraged. I jumped out of bed; I looked at my watch—it was only half-past six. “What can this outrage mean.” I shouted, “at such an hour as this—this uproar, only proper to the opening of a magician’s cavern in a pantomime at Christmas, or to the attraction of the tallest giant or greatest wonder at a fair?” Bent on obtaining a reply, I dressed myself and descended, and then received my first lesson in American hotel life. The sleeping community of the house was wakened, not by the gentle complimentary tap at every door, as in European hostels, but the more abrupt and democratic expedient of a gong, which rouses the whole house by its clamour at six o’clock, and at half-past thunders again to announce that breakfast is ready. On this occasion, however, I was not ready for the breakfast. Deafened by its announcement, I was not so lucky as to be resuscitated by the meal. Still I learnt that I could have it at any hour I pleased, and in first-class hotels this involves no loss of comfort. In inferior ones, however, the stranger had better feed at once. He should close with the first offer, lest while his appetite is growing stronger the entertainment should grow worse. He should be counselled by Macbeth, and feel that the breakfast, like a murder, if well done, should be done quickly.

Still, if, content with the second breakfast, you resolve upon more sleep, you must lie awake for half an hour till the second alarm is over (I defy you to sleep through it), and certainly you may amuse yourself in various ways *ad interim*. You may observe the curious implement which held the candle that lit you to bed. What its original shape may have been is a matter hid among the mysteries; what is its present, Euclid himself, with all his capacity for figure, would find it difficult to say. Take it, however, in its various bearings, and it will probably occupy your attention a good twenty minutes. The remaining ten may be occupied in an abstract calculation as to that remote period of time when it was likely to have been last cleaned. Whatever hotel you may be in, this will prove an unfailing source of occupation until it is time to sleep again; but in "country quarters" other subjects will be worthy your admiration.

You cast your eyes towards your washhand-stand, and you see a piece of drapery hanging thereupon. It has a strange remote resemblance to a bit of coarse point lace, only that the interstices are rather larger and the pattern is irregular. On surveying it with more attention you discover that it is only a towel, but so ragged and so riddled that its real character is the last thing you could possibly detect. Sometimes you may get yourself involved, too, in the intricacies of a torn sheet, and exercise your ingenuity for half an hour in getting out of them. Other objects will interest the attention of the antiquarian, such

as abridgments of various utensils, which may be deficient in noses, spouts, and handles,—or the speculative mind may indulge in computing how many cracks a tumbler may have in it, and still—a great phenomenon—retain the capacity of holding liquid. Ingenuity, also, is to be exercised in selecting that particular part of the rim where you may apply your mouth without danger of making a memento on your lips.

All joking apart, it surprises a European, but more particularly an Englishman, how inferior are even the best hotels in America in matters of minor accommodation. A pair of snuffers is a rarity. You may have a poker to your fireplace, but tongs and shovel are companions that you will meet with just as seldom as a Grand Duke and Duchess.

THE WESTERN WHIG.

AMERICA is, *par exemple*, the great country of elections. Every separate State, I need not say, elects its own governor and subordinate officers, so that, comprising all the civic and rural elections of each State, voting in one quarter or another is going on continually. But the election of elections is that of the President, which takes place every four years. This, like all the others, is by ballot—the ballot-box, in fact, being the State coach-box of America, and whoever gets at the top of that is able to drive the national omnibus.

Previous to an election all sorts of meetings and canvassings go forward, and tolerably loud-lunged orators make tolerably long speeches. It is a great point to get a general to become an orator on these occasions, the title of general carrying a weight with it which does not attach to colonels and majors of Militia and Volunteer companies, who are much too plentiful to be impressive. The weakness of a love of titles has long been charged upon the Americans, but they estimate them in a way that is sufficiently practical at election time. Between a fighting soldier and a talking soldier, they say, the differ-

ence is as great as between the hatchet that will chop and the hatchet that wants grinding.

Still election speeches are very amusing, if for the most part they are rather fierce. The political cauldron once set boiling tends to run over and scald on all sides. All parties disagree upon every point but one, and that is the point of heartily bespattering each other. In that fundamental principle their unanimity is wonderful. Sometimes, however, a speaker prefers ridicule to vituperation, and in America, as elsewhere, the shaft of sarcasm is found more effective than the swashing war-club of abuse. I will give an instance of sarcastic humour from a speech I heard delivered in the late presidential contest. The speaker was a colonel, — that is, a real fighting colonel, — a Tennessean, who had led his volunteers at the battle of Cerro Gonto, one of the hardest fought fields in the whole Mexican war. He was not only one of the bravest, but one of the handsomest men of his time, and he told his quaint western stories with a humour and significance which I wish I could better imitate than in the words I put on paper.

Praising his candidate, General Taylor, whom he held up to the shouting admiration of his audience by the attractive names of "Old Zack," "Old Rough and Ready," "The Hero of Palo Alto, Resaca, and the never-to-be-forgotten Buena Vista;" and commending him to their love by the more endearing title of "The Old Hoss," — he attacked with sufficient vigour his opponent, General Cass,

and General Cass's friends—the “Loco Focos,” as they were called.

“You see, my friends,” said he, “down in my State—that’s Tennessee—where our shores of eternal forest are washed by the waters of the mighty Mississippi” (they love a bit of magniloquence), “we grow a deal of corn—yes, a right smart heap of it we *do* grow. Well, one day I came upon a wood-cutter, who was hewing timber in a clearing, and seeing the soil was rich—‘My friend,’ said I, ‘I reckon you have good crops of corn here.’ ‘Yes, sir,’ says he, ‘we have nauthin’ else: forty-five bushels to the acre.’ ‘That’s good,’ says I; ‘and what now do you do with it?’ ‘Why,’ says he, ‘we make it all into whiskey, except a small trifle that we waste in making bread.’

“Now, my friends, I must tell you that we also grow right good men down in Tennessee, and we make them all into Whigs, except a few that we waste in making Loco Focos. Now, the Whigs are General Taylor’s men—yes, Old Rough and Ready, boys; Old Zack will have them all,—the Old Hoss *will* have them all, sir; while the few miserable waste critters—the Loco Focos, and the Dough-faces—fall to the share of General Cass. The Dough-faces, the bread-men will be his—there’s no doubt of that; but the whiskey boys, the lads of spirit, will be all General Taylor’s. I tell you, General Cass will find his votes lying very loose about. Now, you don’t know, perhaps, what I mean by ‘lying loose about,’ so I’ll explain it to you by a story.

"You see, there was a friend of mine in Tennessee who was one of the Bhoys, and he got married; and after that he did not meet his friends so often, and liquor round with them as he used to do. But after he was married about three weeks, he began to feel as if he'd like to see the Bhoys again, and so he went down to the town—and they were all so glad to meet him, that he was obliged to liquor round with them more than *two* times, I can tell you. He got quite enough of brandy-and-water that day, to say nothing of what he had had of mint julep, smash, cocktail, gin-sling, and vox populi. Well, as he was going home, he thought the old street, which was straight enough in the morning, must have been altered in the course of the day, for it struck him as being rayther crooked, and he brought himself up against some doors which were not his own, and he began to suspect that he was not exactly as a newly-married man ought to be who was going home to his wife. So he remembered having heard that milk was a capital thing for a man in his condition, and when he got back he tapped at his wife's door—for she had gone to bed—and says he, 'Mary, Mary.'

"'What, under the canopy, do you want at this time o' night?' says she.

"'Have you got any milk about?' says he.

"'What, under the canopy, do you want with milk?' says Mary.

"'Never mind,' says he; 'but have you got any?'

"'There's some in the dining-room; you'll find it on the sideboard.'

"Down went Dick to search ; but he couldn't find it nowhere. So he goes back to the bedroom door, and he taps at it again.

" 'Why, what, under the canopy, do you want now?' says Mary.

" 'That milk,' says he ; ' it's not in the dining-room.'

" 'Well,' says she, 'if it's not there it must be somewhere in the kitchen.'

"So down went Dick again, and groped all about the kitchen, but no milk could he discover ; so he went up again, and says he, 'Mary.'

" 'Well, what, under the canopy, *is* the matter with you to-night ?'

" 'That milk,' says he.

" 'Why, hav'n't you found it yet ?'

" 'No,' says Dick ; ' it's rayther hard to find.'

" 'Why, there's plenty of milk in the house somewhere

" 'Well,' says Dick, ' I don't mean to doubt your word, Mary ; but this I *will* say—that if there *is* any milk in the house, it must be lying about—rather loose.'

"So will it be with General Cass, my friends. He'll find his *votes* lying about—very loose indeed in Tennessee."

WOOD AND ITS USES.

THE stranger in America is apt to be struck by the generally ephemeral nature of its domestic and public buildings. On every side, and in all things, he beholds the use of wood. Not merely the dwellings of the poorer classes, but those of the rich ; nay, even the buildings that it is desirous to make as permanent as possible—the churches and other public edifices—are usually of wood. The same may be said of their pavements, wharves, and bridges, where durability is so desirable.

We can understand how, in a young country, where timber is so abundant, that the readiest and cheapest mode of structure would be necessarily adopted ; but when years of prosperity have developed wealth, it seems strange that in so many instances public works should have a character that is rather ephemeral than permanent.

Some, however, of such works in timber are worthy of every admiration. Their boldness and ingenuity are only to be paralleled by their extent. Branches of lakes and arms of seas are spanned by lofty causeways, often exceeding a mile in length, which, frail and dangerous as they look at a distance, have great strength and durability,

and which further have the warrant that in most cases the difficulty of making solid foundations renders the use of stone impracticable. Their floating bridges, again, which sway with the current of wide rivers, are wonderful devices ; whilst all of these constructions have the advantage that in case of damage they are so easily repaired, and at a comparatively small expense.

What I chiefly objected to in the use of wood was its employment in the floors of stables, which never could be kept so clean as in the ordinary way of paving. On mentioning this to an American friend, he replied, " Well, I guess you're right ; we are a great people for wood—we've got plenty of it, you see. I reckon that in the old country you'd be more saving of it than we are." " Yes," said I, " but even with such plenty I would not use it for the floor of a stable, because a stone pavement is much better. I think it quite enough you should have your walls of wood, your roof of wood, your rack of wood——"

" What would you say, then," he broke in, with a knowing look from the corner of his eye, " if we had our horses *fed* on wood besides ?" " I suppose you mean your horses are sometimes ' crib-biters,' as some of our old country horses are, and to an extent that requires iron racks and mangers."

" No ; I don't mean no sitch thing—I mean a regular feed of timber."

" Well, that is something new," said I.

" Waal, I'll tell you how it happened. You see, we

Amerykins are about the most machine-making people to be found in the hull universe—'ticklarly the Yankees—and one of them 'Down-easters' heerd, some time ago, that abaout Noo Orleens shoe-pegs was fetchin' a considerable of a price. So what does he do but make a machine to turn out shoe-pegs by the thousand, and he made a right smart heap of 'em—he did, and shipped 'em off along with himself, straight away down south. Waal, it so happened they had rather a long passage, and the ship took it into its head to go ashore at Key West,—and what with the delay of getting her off ag'in, when he got with his shoe-pegs to Noo Orleens, what does he find there but another chap who had heerd of his speckilation and had got down thar with a lot of pegs afore him.

“Waal, the captain of the ship thought that the Yankee was busted up—that there warn't a mossel of a market left for him, and he'd best make tracks ag'in for hum. But the Yankee said he guessed not—he'd take his chance in the market still; and so he did,—and he come back lookin' right smart in a couple of days or so, and made the Capt'n open his eyes a little when he showed him a handful of bank bills. 'Why, you never mean to say,' says he, 'that you got them for your shoe-pegs?' 'I guess I did, though,' said the Yankee.

“‘Why,’ says the Capt'n, ‘to say nawthin’ of the other chap bein’ afore you, your pegs was all spiled—they was all sopped with the salt water we got in through our leak when we grounded at Key West.’

“‘That’s the idee I goes on,’ says the Yankee. ‘You see I brought my machine down along with me; so I sharpened my pegs at the other eend—just give ’em another soaking, and I sold ’em all for *oats*!’”

AMERICAN HUMOUR.

THE humour of America is of a totally distinct character from that of any other country. Sometimes it is quaint and sly; sometimes it is full of exaggeration—a sort of overgrown grotesqueness, as if to fit the enormous country in which it has been generated. Its mirthful fancies are often overstrained, as if the Momus of America loved to look at his own broad grins in a magnifying mirror, which distorts while it enlarges. Of such a class are some of those extravagancies which were imported a few years ago, and which ran the round of the papers—as, for example, the man who was so tall that he was obliged to get a ladder to shave himself; and the lady who went to the post-office and put herself in instead of the letter, and never found it out until the postmaster inquired if she was double or single.

I remember some good instances of a sly character merely, and some where slyness and exaggeration are tolerably blended. Of the sly class may be mentioned the American story of the *Skcered* Dog.

“Waal, I’ll tell you a story of a dog. A friend of mine was uncommon fond of huntin’ and gunnin’, but of

all kinder sports, I guess he loved best to be huntin' wolves; he was regular death upon a wolf—he was. He'd give any money for a good wolf-dog; and, though he had plenty of his own, he was always buyin' noo ones. Waal, he heerd of a fine dog, down away in Jacksonville—a critter that was reckoned to be one of the boldest dogs in the keounty, and off he sot to git him,—and a pretty big heap o' dollars he had to give for him, I tell you. Waal, home he come with his dog, and it warn't long before he had a notion he should like to try him. So off he sot to the woods with him, and I guess he soon came on a wolf,—when away went the varmint, and right away went the dog, and right away arter both of 'em went my friend, mighty fast—but he soon lost sight of 'em, dog and varmint tew, and at last, as he turned the corner of a clearing, he come on a man felling timber, and, says he—'Friend,' says he, 'have you seen sich a thing as a wolf and a dog going along this way?'

“‘Waal, I reckon I have,’ says the man.

“‘They wur runnin’ pretty fast, I reckon?’

“‘They were doin’ nawthin’ else,’ says t’other.

“‘I know’d he was a fast dog!’”

“‘He’s nawthin’ else,’ says the woodman; ‘’twas about the sharpest race atwixt ’em I see for a long while.’

“‘A race!’ says my friend. ‘Waal, now, what do you mean by a race?’

“‘Why, I mean to say,’ says he, ‘they wur pretty close together for a time, but the dog was raal grit; he

warn't goin' to be beat, not he,—so he exerted himself at last, and I dare say by this time he's *ahead* of the wolf by half a mile.' ”

Here is a specimen of the grandiloquent.

“Waal, now, talk of heavy hittin'—the heaviest blow I ever heerd on was that that Obed Wheeler hit Jeshurun White. Jesh, you see, was kinder quarrelsome, and one day he walks up to Sugar Hill, where Obed was at work, hoein' taters, or cartin' pumkins or suthin else about the fields, and Jesh begins in his old style—high falutin and cavortin', and saying he was the best man as wur ever raised in all Vairmount, and daring any man afore him to show he wur a better. So Obed, who was workin' near him, warn't riled a bit at what he said,—didn't answer him a mossel, but jist turned quietly round and hit Jesh under the chin, knocking him clean into a furrer, where he lay about as straight as if he had been a copse. Waal, he didn't get up soon; he lay quiet for some time, and then at last he pulled himself together, and sot up on eend,—and looking round kinder wild, says he, ‘I reckon that was a considerable of a storm we had to-day; did the lightening happen to strike any one but *me*?’ ”

Luggage in America is knocked about in the most reckless manner possible, and, from the way in which it is scrambled for at the end of a journey, is often lost. On this subject I was once favoured with a specimen of Yankee humour, that, to say the least of it, was ingenious.

“I was troubled myself once about losin' of a trunk,”

said a New England traveller, "but I guess that was a caution to me, and it has never happened ag'in—I lost it in the railway cars, and a regular snarl we had about it, the man at the terminus and me; but I was determined that the fellow shouldn't torment me for nawthin', so I insisted on my trunk. 'Han't you got it yet?' says he.

"'No,' says I.

"'Waal, have a little patience.'

"'I'd rather have my trunk,' says I, 'and I'll make you a present of the patience.'

"'Waal, this riled him a bit; so, by way of soft saw-dering him, I called him Major—but lor! he turned round at it like a snappin' turtle, and he says, 'Don't call me Major—I'm a Kur-nel.'

"'Oh, I ax your pardon,' says I; 'I'm sure I wish you was a gin'ral, and then perhaps you might have some gin'ral information on the matter.'

"'Why, plague take you,' says he, 'what would you have me do? What like was your trunk?'

"'Waal,' says I, 'twas rayther like a trunk—one trunk, I reckon, is much like another.'

"'Hadn't it no mark on it?'

"'Oh yes, indeed,' says I. 'It was marked and scratched all over with the bad usage it got in your tar-nation rail-cars.'

"'Had it a name on it?' says he.

"'No,' says I; 'I travels anonymous.'

"'Nor no letters on it?'

“‘No,’ says I ; ‘there’s some letters inside of it—but them’s private, and I guess you can’t see them through the kiver.’

“Waal, this riled him more than ever, and though I rarely meant nawthin’, he thought I was pokin’ fun at him, and his dander riz, I tell yer ; he got quite savagerous, quite wolfish-like,—and looking as ugly as thunder—‘You want your trunk,’ says he. ‘Waal, shall I tell yer how to get it? Whistle for it—whistle for it,—that’s the best thing you can do ;’ and then he walked off right away, as if he was goin’ to bust his biler.

“Waal, these last words of hisn sot me a leetel thinkin’. ‘Whistle for my trunk!’ says I ; ‘tworn’t no use doin’ that whilst the wind was whistlin’ so bad, and the ingin was whistlin’ tew—I shouldn’t have been heerd a mossel. So I thought of a noo notion ; I’d got a dog that Uncle Josh give me, a kinder mixer of a spannel and a tarrier,—might have been a bull-dog for what I know, when the United States was settled, and jist changed himself with sarcumstances. Waal, he was a raal good dog, he was—he’d kill a rat or bring a keow home, or do anythin’ that was handy—and he was very fond of me,—allers follerin’ me abaout, and comin’ whenever I whistled for him. Waal, one day this faithful critter got run over by a hay cart ; so what did I do but skin him, and kiver my next trunk with his skin,—and jist to show how the critter’s habits is survivin’ in his hide, if I want my trunk now, I whistle for it.”

DETROIT AND ITS SIGNS.

DETROIT, near Lake St. Clair—originally a French fort in the line of the old Canadian settlements, now a thriving and extending city in the state of Michigan—combines with some traces of its origin a feature of commercial grandiosity which, however prompted by the magnitude of the lakes and prairies that surround it, is a something exceptional, even in America.

Whilst its shops are of the ordinary dimensions, and its people in their stature are by no means of the race of Anak, the signs over the shop doors seem only intended for the eyes of giants. Gigantic boots—descendants, doubtless, of those renowned seven-leagued articles recorded in fairy history,—enormous jugs, sufficiently big to contain draughts that would have slaked the thirst of even the wearers of those boots,—anvils that the Cyclops might have thumped upon in forging Olympian thunderbolts,—and watches of such portentous dimensions, that they would have roused the ambition of Brian O'Linn himself, when, in that verse of wide-world fame, he supplied himself with sheepskin garments, and then discovered he

“Had no watch to put on.”

And these watches are exhibited in all conceivable positions ; sometimes on the top of a lofty pole, where a gold one is perched, as if it had grown there,—looking in the distance like golden fruit—as if a slip from the garden of the Hesperides had been transplanted in ages past, and perpetuated pippins in this vigorous American soil, where it is known that a crowbar planted over-night will sprout twelvepenny nails next morning. Sometimes the watch hangs from the top of the house, suspended on an iron holdfast, the size of a moderate crane, as if some *ennuyé* wished to kill time by gibbeting a dial. Sometimes a chrome-coloured poodle dog, painfully balanced on the tuft of his tail, at the top of a pillar, holds a watch in his mouth ; and the American Eagle himself is arrested in his flight by having a watch suspended in his beak, as if to give warning to the universe of the time he meant to pounce on it. In short, look where you will, you will see such a quantity of watches, that poor Detroit seems to be troubled with a virulent *tic douloureux*.

THE ATLANTIC TELEGRAPH.

THEY may talk as they will of the old "liners" over the Atlantic, but this is the most wonderful liner of them all.

We have seen the imaginary lines drawn on our maps and globes, called the parallels of latitude; but here is a real line across the globe, which has no parallel whatever.

Then the *modus operandi*. Two ships meet in the midst of the Atlantic—the cable is joined—and the ships part, each bearing her respective portion to the country it belongs to. There is something very grand in this—two of the leading nations of the world meeting each other halfway in a work of international utility. If one may be allowed, however, for a moment to trifle with its dignity, it may be said that, whereas such a work ought to be conducted in the soberest mood, nevertheless, before its agents begin it they must be "half seas" over.

Again, superb as is the project, there may be some opposition to it. Opposition! and from whom? The banks.

What banks?

The banks of Newfoundland, and their formidable



company of cod-fish—an association that is unlimited, and with power to add to their number.

But that company is very much thinned by something more fatal to them than the line of the telegraph—there are the incessant lines of the fishermen.

But in that case they can scarcely be called a joint-stock company, for every fish goes on his own hook.

The great Gulf Stream also might oppose it, claiming the right, time immemorial, of its influence in the Atlantic and objecting to have the electric current under its own.

The electric cable is again, clearly, a game of *cross* purposes.

The old lady called Nan Tucket, has promised to furnish the stranger with a bed on his coming across from Europe.

Scarcely a civility, I think—a very damp bed to offer a visitor.

But then, on the other hand, it may be said that the ladies on each side of the Atlantic, watching for their (electric) sparks, will increase the friendly relations between the countries.

And yet it is a strange proof of friendship, as any captain of a ship will tell you, that they should give a rope's end to each other.

Then the change it will cause in our vocabulary. Instead of talking, in the future, about the thread of our discourse, we shall have to say the cable of our conversation.

What can that cable hold ?

The longest yarn on record,—a talk three thousand miles long.

And how deep is a discussion? Conducted in this fashion, why, it is scarcely to be fathomed !

We may say, in talking thus under the sea, that we are immersed in the profoundest conference.

Every one is familiar with the old Scotch ditty—

“Over the sea, over the sea,
I heard a little bird whisper to me.”

That was only across the Straits of Dover, or at most the narrow Channel seas ; but now we can sing of talking across the Atlantic,—only the burden of the song will run—

Under the sea, under the sea,
Some one in Europe is talking to me.
Fondly I'm trusting to this lover of mine,
In the depth of his love, by the depth of his line.



POETRY.



THE LAY OF AN IRISH MINSTREL.

ON THE OCCASION OF THE VISIT TO IRELAND OF THE
PRINCE AND PRINCESS OF WALES.

WHEN whisper came
In friendship's name,
Across the wave careering,
That Dublin's Earl
And Denmark's Pearl
For Innisfail were steering ;
To ev'ry heart
It did impart
A joy as rare as thrilling.
Though pen be weak
Such joy to speak,
The spirit's more than willing.
Oh, Old Erin !
That home of hearts—sweet Erin !
A kindly deed
Will find its meed
For ever in old Erin.

Oh, not in vain
In Patrick's fane
Should be the installation
That makes a knight
Of order bright
Amidst a gallant nation !

Be knighthood's vow
Reminding how
The accolade imposes
That shamrocks share
The Royal care
As well as England's roses.
Oh, old Erin !
That home of hearts—sweet Erin !
The righteous deed
Will have its meed
For ever in old Erin.

In history's page
From age to age,
What changes vast may strike us !
The foreign foes,
Oft met with blows,
May come at last to like us.
In days of yore,
From Erin's shore
We drove the Danes before us :
But now a Dane
Will surely gain
A smiling vict'ry o'er us !
Oh, old Erin !
That home of hearts—sweet Erin !
A gentle deed
Will find its meed
For ever in old Erin !

A PORTRAIT.

SAY who can catch her—there's the thing,
The shyest bird of quickest wing
 Is not more wary ;
Go, seize the gossamer, or find
A fetter to enchain the wind,
 Or catch a fairy.

Or bid the fawn not startle when
Some footsteps down the silent glen
 Disturbs the heather ;
Or with prediction stout defy
The chances of an English sky
 And tell the weather.

The fluttering, restless vane, that's showing
When a capricious wind is blowing,
 May be called staid
To the quick motion and abstraction,
The life and thought expressed in action,
 Of this sweet maid.

Whate'er the cause—sub-sympathetic,
Super-electric, or magnetic—
 Reproof disarming ;
She's best as 'tis : for were she aught
Like others—calm, restrained, well-taught—
 She'd be less charming.

LOST LOVE.

IT was a dream : it was a dream,
As comes on snow a sunny gleam,
As the foam upon the stream,
Or like the song

We hear in spring-tide green
From the bird that is never seen,
Whose voice too sweet has been
To delight us long.

Oh, in those days of pleasure
I counted o'er my treasure
That fancy without measure
In the future found.

Now the heart that hope deceives,
Like the fading summer, grieves
O'er the rose's fallen leaves
On the dark cold ground.

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

LOVE and Friendship, 'tis believed,
 Once went to a masquerade.
 Friendship was with smiles received ;
 Love, with distant looks surveyed.
 Love was a little piqued, poor fellow,
 Thus to be shunn'd by every belle.
 So the rogue made Friendship mellow ;
 And, when the wine-cup worked its spell,
 "Now," said Love, "a freak we'll play.
 Friendship, fling that cloak away ;
 This awhile to me resign,
 And, if you'll but dress in mine,
 Prudent belle and wise mamma,
 All we'll puzzle—ha, ha, ha !"

Love, exulting in his scheme,
 Friendship's mask and mantle wore,
 And gentle maids could scarcely deem
 So mild a look such treachery bore.
 Thus did he beguiling lead 'em,
 Till the masquerade was done ;
 And many a heart he met at freedom
 Was, alas ! at parting won.
 Ever since, the rogue hath gone
 With this mask and mantle on.
 Maids, beware when Friendship plies,
 Perhaps 'tis Love but in disguise ;
 Prudent belle or wise mamma
 May be puzzled—ha, ha, ha !

THE IRISH MERMAID.

A MERMAID once, 'tis said,
Came near Irish cliffs to dwell,
And to her cave there often sped
A gallant, rolling ocean Swell.
He curl'd his head whene'er
He paid his visits there,
The affections to ensnare
Of this Irish diving belle.

One day this Swell was borne
To the Mermaid's shadowy cave,
With some trifles he had torn
From the wreck of a galleon brave.
"Here," said he, "I bring my fair
A comb and glass of beauty rare,
With which to trim her sea-green hair
As she floats upon the wave."

"Oh, be aisy, if you please,"
Said the Mermaid to him mild;
"Is it by presents such as these
That you think I'd be beguiled?
Don't I know you've struck and wrecked
Some noble ship, and do you expect
That in her plunder I'll be decked,
You young thief of the waters wild?"

“ By the honour of my crest,”
Half indignant he replied,
“ A ship’s my prey—and I hunt my best
When I would strip her for my bride.
But no more of these vexations—
I’ll give up my depredations,
And in gentle undulations
Evermore with thee abide.

“ Say you’re mine, I’ll lay my head,
With all those curls so many crave,
On your precious oyster-bed,
Which spreads beneath your ocean cave.
By-the-by, I hear they are numbered
As much as six shillings a hundred,
And with such wealth we’ll ne’er be sundered,
But spend in comfort all we have.”

“ Ah ! get out of that,” says she ;
“ Now I see your tricks too well.
What a fool you’d make of me,
My palavering ocean Swell !
You only want to plunder me,
And sell the bed from under me—
Get out now !”—and it’s a wonder she
Escaped the rogue so well.

A SEA-SONG.

FILL a bumper to friendship—the eight bells are ringing ;

'Tis midnight—and now, on the mid-ocean wave,

Our hearts in the bond of one feeling are clinging,

For there is but a plank between us and the grave.

Independent and selfish ashore we go straying ;

But here, on the wide heaving ocean afloat,

A bond of fast friendship is made in the saying :

“ Our fates now are one, boys—we're in the same boat ! ”

'Tis not always in kindred we find most affection :

Full oft from the stranger our best smiles are caught,

Who, whether he meets us in joy or dejection,

Gives a sympathy sweeter, because 'tis unsought.

And on ocean this bond has a power all its own, boys,

The friendships there made are as deep as the flood.

“ Blood is stronger than water,” some say,—but I've known, boys

That the ties of the water are stronger than blood !

TO MARY.

I THOUGHT that I could safely meet
Those eyes again, when years had flown
Between me and that time so sweet
I hoped thou should'st be yet my own.

I thought that I could calmly speak
Of all those early days long past,
When love's first blush was on thy cheek, .
And I loved too—the first—and last.

But each sweet word with magic might
Waked sleeping memory from her tomb,
And those bright eyes of azure light
Warmed withered feelings into bloom ;

And thoughts that lay like darkened streams
That flow unseen beneath our earth,
Till upward to the light they spring
Once more in bright and gushing birth,

Now rise as fresh and bright within
The hidden depths of this fond heart
As when it first aspired to win
Thee, Mary—dearest as thou art.

Oh, do not chide—oh, do not blush !
Such love as ours cannot be wrong ;
Can we those gentler feelings crush,
That even *Time* has spared so long ?

REJECTED ADDRESSES.

AH, go along now ! Why will ye be taazing,
Taazing a young woman out of her life?
I think you might see your endavour's not plazin',
So go somewhere else if you're wantin' a wife.
Now, no more of your tryin'
To come over me with your snivellin' and sighin' ;
Of coorse—I know very well you are dyin',
As all of you say.
'Tis little I like of the best
Of the boys that come here to protest ;
But if one I hate more than the rest,
'Tis yourself, Dinny Shea !

I know very well that my mother's expectin'
A call from that cunning snug woman, your aunt ;
The ear of my mother I know she's infectin'—
I guess all she says, tho' you think that I can't.
She'll lave you, of coorse, ev'ry fardin,
And the cow, and the house, and the garden ;
But I scorn them all—and yourself in the bargain.
So now, Misther Shea,
Be off, if you're wise, while your road is still clear ;
For, if you keep lingerin' and blunderin' here,
There's a boy, should he cotch you, will tickle your ear,
And that same's Barty Bray.

My mother, forgive her ! would marry her daughter
To any bosthoon that had lucre and land ;
But I'd sooner be led like a lamb to the slaughter,
Than barter my heart or make sale of my hand.
Yis—like a lamb, Misther Shea,
Tho' you're grinnin' as much as to say,
'Twould be betther keep out of my way
If my timper should rise.
'Faith, my manners you'd better not ruffle ;
You see I've got hold of the shovel,—
Be off now ! nor snivel nor snuffle—
Disperse !—if you're wise !

HALF A HEART OR THE WHOLE.

INSTEAD of devoting my mornings to thee,
Would'st thou like me with Fanny to linger?
I own she is pretty and full of *esprit*,
And touches the harp with sweet finger;
But take care—for one day, in a charming duet,
When our voices delightfully blended,
I thought, when our eyes by mere accident met,
It was time that the pastime was ended.

I'll try to love less if you're happy the more;
I'll be cooler, if you would prefer it;
And I'll try with another to share my full store,
If you'll tell me to whom to transfer it.

The market of love, like all markets, I fear,
Is held cheaper whenc'er 'tis o'erflowing;
But remember that plenty comes not every year,
And the surplus to save is worth knowing.
But if love as it lessens is valued the more,
My system of traffic I'll alter—
I'll squander my heart like Dutch spices of yore,
And burn incense on every altar.

THE GREENWOOD TREE.

WHO is the maid with the beaming eye,
Adown and adown by the greenwood tree ?
Is she the light of the evening sky
Watching so earnestly ?
'Tis not the glow of the sunset dye,
Bright though its hues may be ;
For brighter the glance of the hunter's eye,
Adown by the greenwood tree.

Who is the maid with the tearful eye,
Adown and adown by the greenwood tree ?
The owlet hoots, and the moon is high ;
Where may the hunter be ?
Deep in the shade does the maid recline,
Weeping the hunter, she :
While his hound lies low, with a mournful whine,
Adown by the greenwood tree.

Sadly now in the dusky dell,
Adown and adown by the greenwood tree,
The maiden kneels at the vesper bell,
Telling her rosary.
Silent and sad is the glen so green,
Meetings no more there be ;
For never again was the hunter seen
Adown by the greenwood tree.

A HEALTH

OVER A SOLITARY GLASS OF SHERRY.

DARLING, to thee I fill my glass :
A bumper fill, and let it pass.
It cannot pass—for there is none
To pass it here :—I am alone.

But this one single health from me
Is more than all the world to thee.
The lover to his promised bride
Is more than all the world beside.

I ask no wine-mate to repeat
The name that makes the draught so sweet,
For many a voice within my heart
Replies how good and dear thou art !

And thou requir'st no other lip
Than mine thy cherish'd health to sip,
Than mine which woo'd thee, mine which won
And seal'd our vows, my darling one !

Whether apart from thee—or, still
More happy, near thee—may I fill
For many a year a glass to thee,
In love and fond fidelity.

THE PIBROCH OF MACGREGOR.

BELEAGUERED by a fiendish crew,
The remnant of a gallant few,
By battle wasted, smaller grew ;
 Yet still, with belt of flame
And sturdy steel, they held at bay
The hell-hounds longing for their prey—
But close and closer, day by day
 The monster myriads came.

There was no time for rest or food
In that wild festival of blood ;
E'en while the gun its shot made good—
 The cannoneer took breath,—
The gallant woman, maid or wife,
Daring the danger of the strife,
With food sustained the soldier's life—
 While he was dealing death.

They held for days their feeble towers
Against the swarm of traitor powers ;
But now they fight for numbered hours,
 Unless relief be near.
Yet still, with spirit undepressed,
They kept the bloody battle crest,
And forth from every manly breast
 Still burst the ringing cheer.

The fort was mined from flank to face,
The match was lighted—short the space
Till Death, in fiery wings' embrace,
Should snatch them all from shame.
When, through the roar of battle, clear,
Like music faint to dreamer's ear,
A Highland maiden's heart to cheer,
The sound of pibroch came.

She rushed amid the battling men—
"Rescue !" she cried, "again, again
I hear the Slogan down the glen,—
A Highland hive is humming.
Ye'll na believe me—for your ear
Is clogg'd wi' battle ; dinna ye hear
Macgregor's pibroch ringing clear ?
The Campbells are a-coming !"

They paused awhile—they could not hear
What reached the maiden's finer ear ;
But soon outrang a warrior cheer,
And prayer from woman's lips broke,
As, piercing through the war-cloud grim
That crown'd the battle's fiery rim,
Like a redeeming angel's hymn
Pealed forth Macgregor's pibroch.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

THE old year's out, and the wine's poured out,
To pledge to the friends all true ;
From the old year we part, and, with hopeful heart,
Libation we pour to the new.
In good old wine, round each friendly shrine
We scatter the rosy dew ;
May flowers spring up round the social cup,
To bloom thro' the year that is new.

Like children at play, through some sunny day
We sport with our years like toys ;
We part with the old, like a tale that is told,
And welcome the coming joys.
But tho' the old year we are parting here,
We part not with old friends too,
For the friends we have known, thro' the time that's flown,
Are dearer than friends that are new.

The rich gold hair of the young and fair
The eye of the lover may prize,
But the silver shed on an old friend's head
Is dearer in friendship's eyes.
Thus standing between the gray and the green,
Whichever way turns our view,
May smiles adorn the eve and morn
Of friends—both the old and the new.

ART AND NECESSITY.

'Tis hard starvation must prevail
Against a man of genius,
But hunger makes the boldest quail
If ever so abstemious.
My outward grandeur all is gone,
My inwards to appease, till
Now hunger's edge claims my last pledge,—
So pop goes my easel.

They say that men of genius are
A spendthrift, careless race, sir,
But when they've nought to spend or spare
It alters much the case, sir.
Our prices men squeeze down to nought,
And then they pay our fees ill ;
And while they brag of pictures bought,
Pops goes our easel.

Pledged one by one, my chairs are gone,
For 'twas on them I fed, sir ;
And in this table-turning age
I've turned all mine to bread, sir.
They tell me landscape's not my forte,
They say I paint my trees ill,
So my timber's cut, though it won't sell,
And pop goes my easel.

In vain to fame I've made my suit,
For all my trials fail, sir ;
In vain my canvas have I spread—
It won't catch fortune's gale, sir.
But still I've to my colours stood,—
Tho' I turn'd my coat to cheese,—till
There's not a scrap to bait a trap,
So pop goes my easel.

I've lived on cloth, just like a moth—
A moth would call me glutton,
When my two legs I did undress
To dress one leg of mutton.
A swallow-tailed coat I swallowed next,
And turned my ducks to peas, till
Now to ease, short commons please,
Pop goes my easel.

Ah ! would Dame Nature but agree
To mitigate my woe, sir,
If when my easel went from me
My palate too would go, sir !
But that will prey from day to day,
Till I am thin as a weasel ;
So my fast to break, on my last stake,
Pop goes the easel.

THE EX-LOVER'S LETTER.

"LOFTY lady, proudly asking
Why your steps are thus pursued
Where, when roaming in the gloaming,
Only one should dare intrude,
I have found this on the ground, Miss,—
A small letter, wet with dew,
The seal a heart and Cupid's dart,
And directed 'tis to you."

"Saucy minx, of secret letters
I, of course, can nothing know.
Dare you thus insult your betters !
'Tis to Bridewell you should go."
"I know a bride well, who was tied well
To a captain this same morn.
I know a maid, too, I'm afraid too,
In the lurch is left behind.

"Lofty lady, take or leave it,
Which you do I little care ;
Its contents, I know for certain,
No content to you will bear.
A captain bold in this has told
That keep his word with you he can't ;
'Tis your niece he wed this morning.
So you're now the captain's aunt.

"Not his wife, Miss, or his life, Miss ;
No—you're but the captain's aunt."

QUILL *versus* STEEL.

THY fringe of plume, suggestive quill,
 Doth mark thee as a fitting minion
 To waft our wishes where we will—
 Give wing to thought, and speed opinion.

I love thee for thy gentle down,
 Which warns us, while our thoughts we're tracing,
 That naught we write should cause a frown—
 No word escape that needs erasing.

Oh no ! forbear, forbear the quill,
 All ye in bitterness who write ;
 Let kindness be its province still,
 And steel serve those who deal in spite.

Give savage Critic pen of steel
 When he, in "slashing" humour sinning,
 "Dishes" an author like an eel,
 With something piquant—after skinning.

Let forger foul, and slanderous snake,
 And the anonymous knave accurst,
 All in congenial darkness take
 The pen of steel to do their worst.

And when in crafty lawyer's hands,
To make the worst seem best the act is,
The pen of steel first place commands
To execute what's called sharp practice.

But doubly steel'd the pen that writes
When keen diplomatist makes *his* mark ;
And extra hard the nib that bites
When protocols are signed by Bismarck.

Away! away! such pen of steel,
Wounding the weak and the unwary ;
Come, my poor goose-quill, and reveal
My fun to Frank,—my heart to Mary.

Away! away! thou pen of steel,
To all of hardened avocation ;
Still serve the quill for those who feel
And own a softer inspiration.

MATRIMONY.

If you marry a wife don't let out, for your life,
What conduces the most to your joys, or I'll bet it
Five hundred to one all your chance of it's gone,—
You may sing all your life, "Don't you wish you may get it."
If you're fond of quiet, she's sure to love riot;
If you love a party, she hates dissipation;
If you're fond of town, she is sure to go down
To her friends in the country to spend the vacation.

But if to the rural 'tis you that incline,
The promised excursion is met with a frown, sir.
She abhors and disdains dusty roads and green lanes,—
Besides, "You're neglecting your business in town, sir."
If, in spite of remonstrance, you utter, "Pooh, nonsense!"
And venture the trip,—there's a letter next post, sir,
Marked "immediate and private," by which you arrive at
The news that she's going to give up the ghost, sir.

You set off in a fright, and you post it all night;
You have visions of mutes, and a crape on your hat, sir;
Up the staircase you rush, falling over the brush
And the dustpan and bucket, and tread on the cat, sir.
Your wife then appears, with her hands to her ears,—
"Mr. B., you're a brute; surely patience I need me:
But, indeed, such a slave had be best in her grave;
What pleasure have I in the life that you lead me?"

THE BATTLE OF LIFE.

THIS life is a battle, with life only ended,

'Tis glorious to win, if with honour 'tis won ;

Don't fight it alone if you can,—for, befriended,

More proudly we stand, or less beaten we run.

Who would be single, alone in his glory

Waving his banner on fortune's proud height ?

How disaster seems less if a friend hears the story

That all, except honour, was lost in the fight.

Duty, too, has its trumpet,—how loudly we hear it,

When haply the heart shrinks the most from the strife ;

It rouses and stirs us to meet and not fear it,—

To win and not yield in the battle of life.

Soldiers always—and if at times placed upon guard,

We're the sentry on duty, his post to defend,

How gladly the gates of our heart are unbarred

When we challenge, and find ourselves answered—"A friend."

A REVERIE.

IN many an early web of Fancy's spinning
 The thread was broken ere my work was done ;
 Yet all untired, another task beginning,
 She wove the fabric while the thread I spun,
 Ev'n as so many spin their lives away,
 The heedless insects of a summer day.

Experience taught more care in realizing
 The full completion of some late design ;
 But when complete, this work beyond all prizing,
 As once we thought, is wetted in the brine
 Of bitter tears, that mar its goodly sheen,
 And so to be is but like what has been.

Thus they who've learnt from that hard worldly teacher
 Fare nothing better than the boy untaught,
 Until at last Despair becomes the preacher,
 And bids us leave for aye such work unwrought.
 Ah! good advice,—if but Despair could keep
 His stern resolve through an unbroken sleep.

But ev'n Despair will "babble in his dreams,"
 And deal with Fancy thus against his will,
 Weaving dark textures where, in fitful gleams,
 Pale shadowy forms a dismal picture fill
 Of Stygian caverns lit by lurid fire—
 A sort of *gob'lin* tap'stry some admire.

For Fancy's mill is never shut up quite,
She can go on without supply of cotton ;
With fibre long or short she'll make it right—
Tho' steeped in tears her thread is never rotten :
Or, passed through fire, unscathed in its vitality,
The fairy film is of asbestos quality.

A PLEA FOR POTHEEN.

Oh, lovely girl !
Oh, priceless pearl !
In Love's deep ocean lying,
I dived in vain
That pearl to gain,
Till tired my heart of trying.
Then away I flew,
Where mountain dew
In hidden nook is making,
And found relief
In drowning grief,
When my poor heart was breaking.

'Tis little I ate
Of bread or mate,
For my appetite's gone with thinking ;
So the gap I fill
From my private still,
With a floatin' balance of dhrinkin' !
Oh, lovely girl !
Oh, priceless pearl !
Had you to wed been willin',
Your poor boy ne'er
Had known despair,
Nor undherstood distillin' !

ON CERTAIN CRITICS.

GIVE me a spade, a mattock, or a mallet,
A flail to thresh the straw that makes my pallet,
A day of toil,—hard fare, by hardship won,—
And tranquil sleep when honest labour's done.
Rather than treacherous trade of pen whose nib
Dribbles in liquid blacking, blacker fib.

As blest the sword, where glory's wings expand,
Or curst, when brandished by a bravo's hand,
So is the pen : the poet and the sage
Adorning or improving bless the age ;
But curst the pen which daylight fears to meet,
Held by a coward hand in dark retreat,
Where spiders in congenial labour join
And spin the treacherous, slimy, soiling line.
Faugh ! on the loathsome nuisances together,
A whip for one—a besom for the other !

LINES

TO A LADY WHO ASKED ME TO WRITE AN ELEGY ON HER FRIEND.

DEAR Madam, I ne'er could play poet on woes.
I rhyme upon pleasure, but sorrow in prose ;
My verse is more suited to boudoirs than biers—
To the sunshine of smiles than the shadow of tears.
I write for the living, and not for the dead ;
Aim at wit as it flies, not at spirit that's fled.
Tho' a *hand* I can turn to a song or a glee,
I a *foot* ne'er could make for a friend's L. F. G.

AN IRISH MELODY TRAVESTIED.

OH ! had we some sweet little isle of our own
Where the knock of the postman is wholly unknown,
Where the bag of the bee can its honey bestow,
And no mail-bag disturb us with bitter o'erflow,
How sweetly would days in tranquillity glide,
With no mothers to preach, and no fathers to chide ;
No sister to snivel, nor cousin to sneer ;
No reproaches from tender ones—"gemm'd with a tear."

What happy oblivion of foe or of friend !
No subscriptions to make, to no call to attend—
No ugly "reminders" of bills still unpaid,
That detestable custom of every trade.
Most welcome to me is her Majesty's face,
If not on an envelope holding its place ;
But when she *gives countenance* thus to a bore,
'Tis a case that the loyalest man may deplore.

THE VOLUNTEER'S ADDITION TO

"THE BOWLD SOJER BOY."

BUT now the Volunteers
Greet our ears
With their cheers,
And men of sober years
Turn to bowld sojer boys.
The schoolboy scorns his play,
And will pray
For the day
When, old enough, he may
Join the bowld sojer boy.
And girls in ev'ry parish,
When *now* they're asked in marriage,
Disdaining clownish carriage,
The hope of louts destroy ;
They say, "Go, drill
And march until,
With gallant step,
You learn to leap
Into a woman's heart, like a bowld sojer boy !"

'Tis fine when, on parade,
By some maid
Of high grade
A handsome present's made
To the bowld sojer boys,—
Some silver trump whose sound,
Ringing round
Guarded ground,
Makes the gallant spirit bound of the bowld sojer boys :
Ah ! when at target practice
The levelled rifle cracked is,
Of triumph then no lack 'tis for marksmen in their joys :
'Tis not bull's eyes
Alone they prize,
But blue ones bright,
That shed their light
Upon the rifle prizemen of the bowld sojer boys

TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH.

POOR leaf, now severed from thy bough,
Tell me, poor leaf, where goest thou?
Alas ! I cannot say.
The storm hath riven the oak,
Which was my only stay
Against the tempest's stroke.

The North wind or the West
May drive me where it will,—
From the forest I love best,
To the plain, the vale, the hill,
Without plaining, without fear.

I go where goes the blast,
In the same swift career,
Where all things go at last,—
Where all things go, both I and you,
The rose leaf and the laurel too.

WHO ARE YOU?

FROM LOVER'S SONGS AND BALLADS.

(This mere trifle is almost unintelligible now, but when first published was so effective and popular, as illustrating genteelly the *slang* cries of the street, that it was honoured by French and Italian versions from the sparkling pen of the renowned "Father Prout," in *Bentley's Miscellany*.—S. L.)

"WHO are you? who are you,
Little boy, that's running after
Everybody, up and down,
Mingling sighing with your laughter?"
"I am Cupid, Lady Belle;
I am Cupid, and no other."
"Little boy, then prithee tell
How is Venus? *How's your mother?*
Little boy, little boy,
I desire you tell me true,
Cupid—oh, you're altered so,
No wonder I cry, *Who are you?*"

"Who are you? who are you?
Little boy, where is your bow?
You had a bow, my little boy——"
"So had you, ma'am—long ago."

"Little boy, where is your torch?"

"Madam, I have given it up:

Torches are no use at all—

Hearts will never now *flare-up*."

"Naughty boy, naughty boy,

Such words as these I never knew:

Cupid,—oh, you're altered so,

No wonder I say, *Who are you?*"

La dame. Qui es-tu? qui es-tu?

Bel enfant, aux gais sourires,

Toi qui court tout devêtu

Et ris parfois, parfois soupirez?

Cupidon. Dame, je suis Cupidon,
Dieu d'amour, fils à Cythère.

La dame. Bel enfant, et-dis moi donc
Comment va Vénus ta mère?
Je te vois, sans carquois,
Cette fois avec surprise,
Cupidon, est-il donc
Etonnant que l'on te dise.

Qui es-tu?

Qui es-tu? Qui es-tu?

Qu'as-tu donc fait de tes armes,

De tes traits de fer pointu?

Cupidon. De *vos* traits où sont les charmes?
Vous votre Beau, moi mon flambeau
Ensemble nous tâchâmes,
Or plus d'espoir, hélas de voir
Pour nous les cœurs en flammes.

La dame. Petit enfant, c'est peu galant
D'user pareil language ;
Pas étonnant que maintenant
Chacun dise au village.
Qui es-tu ?

La Sig. Chi sei tu ? Chi sei tu ?
Dimmi piccolo fauciullo,
Sempre andante sù e giù
Sospirando fra 'l trastullo.

Cupid. Son Cupidon in verita
Re de burle leggiadre.

La Sig. Dunque di per carita
Come stia tua madre ?
Senz arco cosi perche ?
Dove sono le saiette
La faretra poi dov'e ?
Semblanze son sospette.
Chi sei tu ?

La Sig. Chi sei tu ? Chi sei tu ?
Arme c'erau' altre volte.

Cupid. Giovan *ella* non e' piu
Mi furan allora tolte.

La Sig. E la torcia, O perche di
hai voluto tu lasciare.

Cupid. Cuori signor aggidi,
piu non vogliano bruciare.

La Sig. Che rispondermi cosi
fauciulletto ! che vergoguer !
Ah ! sei cambiato, si
A te dunque dir bisogna.
Chi se tu ?

MOLLY CAREW.

(This admirable version is also from the pen of Father Prout, and will be felt to be equally deserving of perusal.—B. B.)

TO THE HARD-HEARTED MOLLY
CAREW. THE LAMENT OF
HER IRISH LOVER.

AD MOLISSIMAM PUELLAM E
GETICA CARUARUM FAMILIA
OVIDIUS NASO LAMENTATUR.

OCH hone !

Oh, what will I do?

Sure my love is all cross'd,

Like a bud in the frost ;

And there's no use at all

In my going to bed,

For 'tis dhrames, and not sleep,

That comes into my head.

And 'tis all about you,

My sweet Molly Carew ;

And, indeed, 'tis a sin

And a shame.—

You're complater than nature

In every feature ;

The snow can't compare

To your forehead so fair,

And I rather would spy

Just one blink in your eye

HEU ! heu !

Me tædet, me piget O !

Cor mihi riget O !

Ut flos sub frigido

Et nox ipsa mî tum . . .

Cum vado dormitum

Infausta, insomnis

Transcurritur omnis. . . .

Hoc culpâ fit tuâ

Mî, Mollis Carûa ;

Sic mihi illudens,

Nec pudens.—

Prodigium tu, re

Es, verâ, naturæ,

Candidior lacte ;

Plus fronte cum hâc te,

Cum istis ocellis,

Plus omnibus stellis

Than the purtiest star
That shines out of the sky;
Tho' by this and by that,
For the matter of that,
You're more distant by far
Than that same.
Och hone ! wierasthrew !
I'm alone
In this world without you !

Och hone !
But why should I speak
Of your forehead and eyes,
When your nose it defies
Paddy Blake, the schoolmaster,
To put it in rhyme,—
Though there's one Burke,
He says,
Who would call it *snublime* ?
And then for your cheek,
Throth ! 'twould take him a week
Its beauties to tell,
As he'd rather.
Then your lips, O machree,
In their beautiful glow
They a pattern might be
For the cherries to grow.
'Twas an apple that tempted
Our mother, we know,—
For apples were scarce,
I suppose, long ago,—
But at this time o' day,
'Pon my conscience, I'll say

Mehercule vellem.—
Sed heu, me imbellem !
A me, qui sum fidus
Vel ultimum sidus
Non distat te magis
Quid agis !
Heu ! heu ! nisi tu
Me ames,
Pereo ! pillaleu !

Heu ! heu !
Sed cur sequar laude
Ocellos aut frontem
Si NASI, cum fraude,
Prætereo pontem ? . . .
Ast hic ego minùs
Quàm ipse LONGINUS
In verbis exprimem
Hunc nasum sublimem.
De floridâ genâ
Vulgaris camœna
Cantaret in vanum
Per annum.
Tum, tibi puella !
Sic tument labella
Ut nil plus jucundum,
Sit, aut rubicundum ;
Si, primitus homo
Collapsus est pomo
Si dolor et luctus
Venerunt per fructus,
Proh ! ætas nunc senior
Ne cadat, vereor,

Such cherries might tempt
A man's father !
Och hone ! wierasthrew !
I'm alone
In this world without you !

Och hone !
By the man in the moon,
You teaze me all ways
That a woman can plaze ;
For you dance twice as high
With that thief, Pat Macghee,
As when you take share
Of a jig, dear, with me,—
Though the piper I bate
For fear the old chate
Wouldn't play you your
Favourite tune.

And when you are at Mass
My devotion you crass,
For 'tis thinking of you
I am, Molly Carew ;
While you wear on purpose
A bonnet so deep,
That I can't at your sweet
Pretty face get a peep.
Oh, lave off that bonnet,
Or else I'll lave on it
The loss of my wandering
Sowl !

Och hone ! like an owl,
Day is night,
Dear, to me without you !

Icta tam bello
Labello !
Heu ! heu ! nisi tu
Me ames
Pereo ! pillaleu !

Heu ! heu !
Per cornua lunæ
Perpetuò tu ne
Me vexes impuné.
I nunc choro salta
(Mac-ghius nam təcùm)
Plantâ magis altâ
Quàm sueveris mecum !
Tibicinem quando
Cogo fustigando
Ne falsum det melos
Anhe
A te in sacello
Vix mentem revello,
Heu ! miserè scissam
Te inter et Missam ;
Tu latitas vero
Tam stricto galero
Ut cernere vultum
Desiderem multùm.
Et dubites jam, nùm
(Ob animæ damnum)
Sit fas hunc deberi
Auferri ?
Heu ! heu ! nisi tu
Coràm sis
Cæcus sim : eleleu !

Och hone !
 Don't provoke me to do it,
 For there's girls by the score
 That loves me, and more ;
 And you'd look very queer
 If some morning you'd meet
 My wedding all marching
 In pride down the street !
 Throth ! you'd open your eyes,
 And you'd die of surprise
 To think 'twasn't you
 Was come to it.
 And, 'faith, Katty Naile
 And her cow, I go bail,
 Would jump if I'd say,
 " Katty Naile, name the day."
 And though you're fair and fresh
 As the blossoms in May,
 And she's short and dark
 Like a cowl'd winter's day,
 Yet, if you don't repent
 Before Easter—when Lent
 Is over—I'll marry
 For spite.
 Och hone ! and when I
 Die for you,
 'Tis my ghost that you'll see every
 Night !

Heu ! heu !
 Non me provocato,
 Nam virginum sat, o !
 Stant mihi amato . . .
 Et stuperes planè,
 Si aliquo manè
 Me sponsum videres ;
 Hoc quomodo ferres ?
 Quid diceres, si cum
 Triumpho per vicum,
 Maritus it ibi,
 Non tibi !
 Et pol ! Catharinæ
 Cui vacca (tu, sine)
 Si proferem hymen
 Grande esset discrimen ;
 Tu quam vis, hic aio,
 Sis blandior Maïo,
 Et hæc calet rariùs
 Quàm Januarius ;
 Si non mutas brevi,
 Hanc mihi decrevi
 (Ut sic ultus forem)
 Uxorem ;
 Tum post hanc diù
 Me spectrum
 Verebere tu . . .
 Eleleu !

THE LAY OF THE LOOM AND THE LOAM.

BEFORE the judgment-seat of Thought,
By subtle agents of the mind
Conflicting interests are brought,
Whose rights or wrongs she fain would find.
The riot would be never-ending
'Twixt potent parties oft contending,
Unless Thought thus could have recourse
To her own smart "detective force,"
To catch the causes of the feud's increase,
And bind the brawlers over to the peace.

Before the judgment-seat aforesaid
Two angry ancient ladies stood ;
And we may just observe, ere more's said,
That once you stir a woman's blood
Her fight assumes a fury fierce
Beyond the courtly "carte and tierce ;"
Shaking the black flag wildly out,
"War to the knife"'s her deadly shout.
Strange natural law, that gentlest things
When moved to hate are far the worst !
Small birds infuriate clap their wings,
The hare fights like a thing accurst :
So if a mad-cap rage should fit her,
In wrath sweet woman is most bitter.

But now to our report :

The ladies were called into court ;

One gave her name as "Jenny Loom,"
 "Spinster,"
The other answered, "Madame Loam,"
 "Westminster,"
Where both were found that very morning
Near to a certain house that's not a quiet house,
And taken up for being rather riotous.
While anger yet was glowing on the cheek,
Belying downcast looks of "mocking meek."
Calm Thought a searching eye on either bends,
And thus entreats them wisely to be friends.

Thought.

Sisters twain of a mighty land,
Why should ye not go hand in hand?
Why not, in mutual love agreed,
Rejoice each in her separate deed,—
Combine your force for joint result,
And thus your peaceful laurels twine
Together around Concord's shrine,
And in twin triumph emulous exult?

The Loam.

"I am the elder," quoth Sister Loam,
"And thro' time-honoured custom trace
Primordial privilege of place.
I was in this my island home
Before her ages long.
The morning lark in the oldest time,
As, singing, she did heavenward climb,
Might hear the ploughman's song;
And Health, with Labour hand in hand,

Went laughing o'er the plenteous land,
Ere the pent Loom made pallid slaves,
Late hours of toil, and early graves.
No hollow cheek, no drooping brow,
Was labour's death-mark, as 'tis now.
My sister, later born, brings pain
And squalid sorrow in her train ;
And poisoned air and stinted room
Yield narrow kingdom to the Loom,
While healthful hinds in natural freedom roam,
Trolling the rollic rhymes
Of good old times !
I am the elder," quoth Sister Loam.

The Loom.

"Thy vaunted claims of earlier birth,
Proud sister mine, of antique earth
Invalid seem, yet don't surprise :
From earliest time the eager cries
Of landed pride would needs secure
The right of primogeniture,—
'Right,' as 'tis called by usage long,
Although the boasted right's a—wrong.
But, for the sake of argument,
I'll prove as ancient a descent.
Nature reveals no law to share
Unequally to equal heir ;
Nature bestows no mark to prove
The firstborn's right to larger love,
Or greater gifts, or loftier power,—
By no such rule *she* grants her dower,
For oft the choicest gifts adorn

Redundantly the later born.
How many a nursery tale runs riot
In loving laud of younger son ?
For him goes forth the fairy fiat,—
By him all daring deeds are done.
Enchanted beauty sworn to save,
He storms the necromancer's cave ;
Rescues the lady—kills the giant :
Beauty and strength to him prove pliant ;
And while thro' blunders elder brothers run,
The lovely princess weds the gifted younger son."

The Loam.

"Such is the nurse's tale of eld,
Sprung from the faith that nurses held."

The Loom.

"But they who rear should know the plant,
And feel the force of Nature's grant :
Were eldest children best, I ween
Such nursery tales had never been.
So much, good sister, for the fame
Of earlier birth ; and now
To prove I have as high a claim
To ancestry as thou.
The distaff—servitor of mine—
Was sceptre of that antique line,
The Fates : in emblematic thread
Our human course was spun and sped.
The emblem of causality,
The type of life and destiny,
The distaff thus, thro' distant haze

Of classic ages seen,
May proudly tell to present days
How old my power hath been,—
And Fancy, through the mystic gloom,
Beholds prefigured thus—the Loom !

The Loam.

Talk not of classic age to me,
Young sister, nor of destiny,
Nor Pagan myth, nor type, nor shrine :
What is such as theirs to mine ?
Ere the first man was made was I,
The third-day work of Deity !
Vainly thou'll strive for claim of birth
To match with mine—majestic Mother Earth.

The Loom.

Proud sister, the primeval hours
Beheld the loom in Eden's bowers.
Mark where her web the spider weaves
At morning in the dewy leaves ;
And thus in Paradise, as now,
Her network spanned the bending bough.

The Loam.

Well, as for age, we'll waive that point ;
But sure, thou'lt not deny
Thou wert in those far distant times
Of less account than I,—
Those early times when, life to keep,
The soil must needs be tilled ;

While garments were but skins of sheep,
The garner were well filled :
No loom-wrought raiment Patriarchs wore,
While busy was the threshing floor.

The Loom.

Was not the sanctuary's shade
Of purple and fine linen made?
So, too, adorned upon his throne
Was ev'n the gorgeous Solomon.

The Loom.

There, sister, thou to me must yield,
From Holy Writ the palm I win—
“ Behold the lilies of the field ;
They toil not, neither do they spin ;
Yet Solomon in all his glory
Was not arrayed like one of these.”—
What canst thou find in all thy story
To match with this, thro' centuries?—
The pomp of Solomon be thine,
The lily's bright array is mine.

The Loom.

The stately lily's loveliness
With admiration I confess ;
But there are humbler stems, that bear
More useful products, though less fair,—
And even beauty we may grant
To the blue flower that crowns that plant
Whose seed can soothe—whose fibre yield
Raiment for those who sceptres wield.

Bright, too, the flower whose changeful dyes,
Tinting the plains in hopeful hour,
Forerun the bursting pod where lies
A nation's wealth in downy dower—
Nay, two great nations profit by the spoil
Of simple labour and instructed toil.

Oh, could the plants with a voice give forth
Their sense of beauty, and use, and worth,
It is not the greatest or brightest could boast
Of value the highest or triumph the most.
Hark ! I can fancy the cotton plant sings,
Rejoicing in wealth far surpassing a king's.

Song of the Cotton Plant.

Boast not, ye buds of the flowering Vine,
Ye fade, where ye flourish, aloft on the pine ;
Boast not, fair Cherokee rose, in your pride,
Your bloom all unprired on the branches may bide ;
Boast not, Magnolia, though, charming the sense,
You perfume a province with odour intense ;
Though humble my beauty, in worth I outshine
The Rose, and Magnolia, and flowering Vine.
The Pariah and Negro, from orient to west,
Are my serfs to supply all that succours me best ;
The love-besought bride or the babe on the knee
Are not tended, nor treasured, nor courted like me.
More fickle than woman, I recklessly range
From suitor to suitor—coquette of the 'Change.
Cleopatra of Commerce, I've ruined more men
Than the fair or the frail—and shall ruin again.

A plain thing of Nature, I leave my own land
 To be wrought into beauty by Industry's hand ;
 To the planter who sells me, his state to maintain,
 I return, raised in worth, to be purchased again.
 The navies of nations unceasingly sail
 O'er twice-traversed ocean with fabric or bale,
 And the fate of proud monarchs far less can appal
 The marts of the world, than my rise or my fall.

The Loam.

An empty pæan dost thou sing
 To thine own credit, Sister Loom,
 For 'tis to me—the Loam—to whom
 These words of triumph honour bring.
 Springing from my fecundity,
 Rich gifts in all variety
 Supply man's pleasures, wishes, wants :—
 I am the mother of the plants.

The Loom.

Thy sister Loom most freely grants
 That truth,—but all must own 'twas Art
 Discovered virtue in each part.
 Without me Flax, and Cotton, too,
 Might rot unnoticed where they grew.
 Sister, thou giv'st the clustering Vine,
 But it is Art that makes the wine.
 Thy flowers no native honey yield,
 Tho' in each blossom 'tis concealed :
 Honey the world might be without
 Unless the bee had worked it out ;
 And Flax and Cotton found a tomb
 If Art had not contrived the Loom.

The Loom.

Oh, for the glorious bygone days,
When loudly rang the votive lays
Of priestesses in temples fair
To chant my praise, to court my care :
Accurst had been the flippant trader's tongue
That then had ventured vaunt,
Or dared to taunt
When to my honour sacred songs were sung.
Before my power the statesman quailed,—
Aye, Rome—that conquered all the world—
Had from her topmost power been hurled
If granaries had failed.
Consuls, Dictators, Senates, Kings,
Bade tendant galleys spread their wings
To seek the garnered grain from far,
Ere hunger roused a servile war.
Far more they feared one harvest's blight
Than all their other foes' united might.

The Loom.

The textile film of Tyrian dye
Was privilege of royalty.
We triumph'd each in different things :
You fed plebeians—I clad kings.

The Loam.

Oh, shallow honour ! empty boast !
Is food or raiment needed most ?
Patrician pride had better borne
Rent robes, than want plebeian corn.

The Loom.

'Tis true the first necessity
Of life is food—without it we
Must die : but if life nought could give
But food, what man would wish to live ?
The beast were brother to him then—
Ev'n in his lair could claim some kin,
For he can choose and change his den,
But cannot choose or change his skin.
For raiment, only Reason cares ;
And mark ! to prove this natural law,
The maniac wild his blanket tears,
And crouches shivering in his straw.
Frail the first bark the fisher bore,
Contented thence his lure was thrown
Along the safe requiting shore :
More venturous craft had ne'er been known
Had man not ventured first to wish
For something more than bread and fish.
'Twas Commerce first enlarged the scope
Of daring will, and tempted hope ;
The Loom not only freight supplied,
But gave the wings to stem the tide.
Then first the sailor ventured far,
Beyond the custom'd land-mark driven ;
Then first he found the midnight star
For higher purposes was given
Than idly to be gazed upon
In wonderment when day was done.
While drowsy drones on shore did sleep,
Those lamps of heaven in bright array

Lit hardy watchers o'er the deep,
And guided through the watery way,
Till Science gave the compass birth
And yielded a new guide to earth.

The Loam.

I never would deny the claim
Of Commerce to a lofty aim
In making, through magnetic sway,
A path upon the pathless way ;
But what's a trader's trip to foreign strand
Compared with homebred toil, that ploughs our native
land ?

The winter's furrow, bleak and bare,
Cut by the patient ploughman's share,
In springtide's brighter hour is seen
In level streaks of cheering green,
And autumn crowns the smiling plain
With waving wealth of golden grain ;
While the cold furrows of the deep
No impress of your labours keep—
Soon as they're ploughed with empty wind
A barren track is left behind.

The Loom.

A barren track you cannot call
What Science traced with thought sublime,
Helping a knowledge birth to all
From out the fruitful womb of time.
When in his fragile caravel
Columbus crossed the western wave,

And proud returning, came to tell
He to the Old a New World gave—
Oh, call not that a barren track
Which bore such glorious tidings back !

The Loam.

Truce to these themes of ancient time,
And foreign feats of foreign clime,
Let's talk alone of England's glory,
And all enough for loftiest story.
England was great ere Trade made claim
To share her triumph and her fame ;
In the bold days of manhood's might,
Of Agincourt and Cressy's fight,
Little was heard of weavers then,
When my brave sons of hill and glen,
The yeomen bold, with "bills and bows"
Made havoc 'mong our shrinking foes,—
When thick the murderous arrows flew,
And dealt out death from churchyard yew.

The Loom.

Even then, familiar with our craft,
You called your arrow "cloth-yard shaft,"
And in the roar of battle loud
It measured many a brave man's shroud.
Nor in the battle-field alone
Was won the good we're proud to own :
The banded burghers made a stand
For that which makes our native land
Supremely blest, supremely bright—
Our matchless means of civil right.

When stalwart barons boldly won
A charter from the worthless John,
They helped themselves, and round the throne
Made Freedom's circle but their own.
Yet soon that circle wider grew,
From the first stone that Freedom threw
Into the stagnant moat around
 The gloomy tower
 Where, drunk with power,
Besotted Tyranny had safety found ;
And idle reeds, slow-rotting round its brink,
Were shaken into action, and soon made
Wild rustling music through the noisome shade,
A sound might make the stoutest despot shrink,
For it betold the time that bondmen learned to think.
Offspring of thought, young Freedom then,
Nursed in the burgher's wardmote, grew,
And, strength'ning year by year,
The dragon privilege o'erthrew,
And taught to lords that men were men.

The Loam.

Aye, rail at lords,—that modern tune
Of democrats, and all who love them :
Like dogs, that simply bay the moon
Because she's bright, and is above them.
For me, I love the days of old
When knightly praise gay ballads told,
By followers sung in easy thrall,
Beside some guardian castle's wall
Where gallant lord, with banded spears,
Held his dependants free from tears.

Then was the ploughshare safely left
 To woman's hands, while sturdy heft
 Of goodly bill was grasp'd, to chase
 Marauders from the country's face.
 Those were the sturdy days for me,
 When men were daring, frank, and free
 To sow or reap, in peace or quarrel,
 The grateful grain, or glorious laurel !
 No newspapers were then to taunt,
 No demagogues were then to vaunt ;
 But pleased dependants loved their lord,
 And all "worked well" with kind accord.

The Loom.

What ! pleased retainers ?—kind accord ?
 If we may trust to History's word,
 Pleasing or kindness never made
 Men like Wat Tyler and Jack Cade.
 Had newspapers been then—a vent
 They'd proved for public discontent,
 And the rude rage of order's foes
 Been shaped in words—not spent in blows ;
 Nor empty words—but such whose weight
 Might sway the balance of the State.
 Aye, safest is the high dominion
 That's broadly based on wide opinion.

The Loam.

Opinion claims no reverence
 But when its source is common sense,—
 When, flowing from the good and wise,
 'Tis like some mountain stream descending

From heaven-ward heights, and grandly wending
Its lengthening way through plains it fructifies :
But when it springs among the base,
Like waters in some swampy place,
'Tis sputter'd up by babbling fools,
As foetid bubbles rise from dirty pools.

The Loom.

Our forefathers in days of old
Hid their opinions like their gold ;
But now we better know their worth,
And, for our interest, both put forth.
No danger now of darksome plot,
Men need not speak the thing that's not,
No lying slave need now protest
The rule his soul abhors, the best ;
The freeman who his wrongs may tell
Can ask redress—need not rebel.
And thus Opinion, with a double might,
Can guide the stately power, and guard the public right.

The Loam.

As swamps breed fogs, so this Opinion
Breeds croakers against all dominion.
Some weaver, on whose cheek appears
The sickly tint of hard-worked years,
In his mixed state of beer and bile
All law and order will revile.
A greasy newspaper he thumbs,
The oracle of the back slums ;
There is the " Charter " well expounded,
There is the Minister confounded,—

The weaver swears that *he* could rule
The nation better ; ——'s a fool !
He could adjust each knotty point
Although " the time is out of joint."
He knocks the table—calls his score,
The trifling count he puzzles o'er ;
And, though to him is not quite clear
This reckoning small of his small beer,
He staggers homeward, all elate
At having settled things of state ;
Misses his way to his own lane,
While paths unknown he'd rashly tread ;
Against some lamp-post, blind with pain,
He knocks his most enlightened head ;
Tumbles to sleep with patriot sputter,
And wakes next morning in the gutter.

The Loom.

Say not to towns alone belong
Mistaken views of fancied wrong.
Is there no village alehouse den
For conclave dark of growling men ?
Is there no Hodge, 'twixt night and morn,
Who saves the State by high taxed corn ;
Who—lively on unfettered hops—
Would untax malt t' increase the crops
Of barley,—but, his heart to cheer,
Calls for another pot of beer ?

One more appeal to reason !—I
Plead for the general family
Of Art industrial, where the hand

Creative is. The generous land
Will reproduce the seed that's thrown
Upon its breast with power its own.
The coarsest bumpkin that e'er trod
With hob-nailed shoes his kindred clod
As well can sow the fertile plain
As though a Newton cast the grain.
Not so the artisan,—his hand
Elaborates what Science planned ;
Time-trained, with care, to plastic art
Or textile skill, he does his part.
The children of the Loam await
Creation's gift—while ours create !

The Loam.

What are thy trifling works to mine—
The spreading oak and stately pine ?
In that the future ship's forecast,
In this behold the aspiring mast.
These come from me—the Loam ! the Loam !
I make the bulwarks of England's home !
Oh, what a joy, how triumphant a pride
When the bark of the Briton is launched on the tide—
When the heart shout of thousands makes one ringing whole
Wild outburst of joy from a nation's full soul ;
Where all feel in common—by sympathy's power
Are spell-bound alike in the charm of the hour ;
Where rank, in that moment forgetting its place,
Shows the flush of fair cheek beside labour's bronzed face.
Where manhood's bold shout, and where beauty's bright smile,
Together applaud the stout work of the isle,

And kerchief of cambric and glazed hat of tar
Wave welcome alike to the brave man-of-war.

The Loom.

With all my heart, sister, I grant you the pride
Of your forest-child grandly afloat on the tide.
But the work is *not* "done," as you say, when the ship
Glides, baptized by beauty in wine, from the slip.
The *slave* of the wave, not her queen, might she roll
If, when you gave the body, I gave not the soul—
The impulse of motion for commerce or strife,
To "walk the wide waters, a creature of life."
Who makes the white wings that she spreads to the gale?
If 'tis Loam gives the oak, it is Loom gives the sail;
The rope must be spun that give stays to your mast,
To balance and poise ev'ry sail in the blast.
If that blast should increase, and the tempest should roar,
The cable must hold her from off the lee shore;
If the battle should rave, and the signal must fly
That bids each brave mariner conquer or die,
'Tis the Loom in its peace weaves the banner that flings
A halo prophetic o'er Victory's wings,
As constant she soars o'er that ensign that sees
No veiling for ages in battle or breeze.

Thought.

Then Thought exclaimed, "No more contend
For separate triumph,—to one end
Your powers combined have made the State
Such as it is—rich, free, and great:
In the brave ship that rules the tide,
The type of England's power and pride,

Have you not shown that each has part--
The native oak, the native art?
Sisters, embrace then—proudly sure,
In union, that ye both secure
This isle that lofty pride of place
Distinctive of the British race.
Disjoined—to ruin both must fall ;
Combined—ye guide and govern all.”



LETTERS.



*Astor House, New York,
March 8th, 1848.*

MY DARLING M. AND F.,

. . . . I was dreaming of you last Saturday night ; and when I got your sweet letters on Sunday, your darling, kind words to me inspired the muse within me, and I wrote the verses which you will find on a subsequent page of this letter, which words I transcribed late last night, preparatory to writing to you to-day. It is not the first time, beloved ones, that the poet's children have been his theme. I have written of my own M. playing by the river-side, not far from where you now are, and of my own F. playing with the sunbeams ; and next I addressed you, conjointly, as the bright and fond images of my dreams.

And now read my song to both of you. I will send you the music by the next post.

THE VOICE FROM AFAR.

I.

Oh, light of my heart ! when beside you I strayed
Thro' the woods and the hills where our hearts intertwined
Like the flowers springing round us, more exquisite made
When wakened to sweetness by summer's soft wind :
I am far from you now—but I feel in my heart,
From the fond words you send me, how loving you are.
Oh, where is the music, engendered by art,
Like the voice of affection that comes from afar ?

II.

When the sun in his splendour here glows in the west,
I know in my own land the darkness then falls ;
That the loved ones I treasure have then sunk to rest,
And, perchance, that *their* dream *my* lost presence recalls,—
And soon will I sink into slumber like them.
And when *they* awake, and send pray'rs o'er the sea,
Their memory will hang round my heart—like a gem
By the genius of dreaming presented to me.

III.

So, sleeping or waking, our hearts interchange
The treasures of mem'ry—the fancies so fond ;
And the link of affection, wherever we range,
The limits of distance can bind us beyond.
Aye ! waking or sleeping, in sunshine or shade,
Fond feeling affords, wherever we are,
The gift of that music, more exquisite made
By the distance it travels—the voice from afar !

My “Lily of Love's Lake” does not seem to have impressed you much ; here it is thought very pretty. However, I do not wonder that my unpretending style of song should not be fascinating to you, who have been singing the more attractive and florid style of Italian, and the richly harmonized phrases of German music, and whose ears have been practised to the sparkling melody and gorgeous modulations of Rossini, in the solos and duets you have played singly and together ; and you know it is my opinion, and an opinion on which I have acted, that I do not think it wise for parents to drive their children in the

beaten track of their own thoughts (the parents' thoughts, I mean); and you will remember how I have placed Mendelssohn and Schubert, and the pretty vivacities of France and Italy, before you, to the exclusion of my own compositions, which I never forced upon you,—but, at the same time, whenever I *do* write a song which the world acknowledges to be not worthless, a daughter can scarcely place herself in a more graceful position than in singing a song of her father's composing. Sir Walter Scott's son did himself little honour when he boasted of never having read his father's works:—but do not suppose, my dear girls, that I am vain enough (presumptuous, I should rather say) to make any comparison between myself and the great man to whom I have alluded, or so unhappy as to believe that you are so cold and insensible to my humbler merits.

*Astor House, New York,**May 1st, 1848.*

MY DEAR MRS. H—,

Either my dear M. or F. will have told you, ere this, that I intended sending you a drawing, as my contribution to your stall at the projected Bazaar for the benefit of the Aged Governesses,—that class of persons to whom so much is due and so little given. As usual, you are engaged in the acts of benevolence, and I am happy, in my humble way, to assist in the well-doing. The drawing I send is a view on the Ohio,—the right of the picture representing the right bank of that mighty river, in the State called after its name, and the whole wood-crowned valley sweeping away in the distance, in the same State. The island (for it is but part of an island) the view contains, is in the centre and left of the picture, between which and the mainland the river sweeps in its northern channel, dividing between Ohio and Virginia, where a deeper channel runs on the southern side of the island.

There the manufacturing town of Wheeling lies, a place also of great commercial resort as a stopping-place on the river for travellers who strike from or for the Atlantic shores. The whole view, comprising the smoky Wheeling, would be too much for *picturesqueness*—the great beauty of the wide river valley lying in the space I have devoted to it—and, as it is not a view of Wheeling, but a pretty picture I wish to send you, I have limited myself to the most picturesque part of the subject. You know I am not a professed landscape painter, but still I hope my little drawing is above par; for since I have been here I have worked very closely in making tinted sketches of the scenes through which I have passed, and I find that, late in life as I have essayed to treat a landscape subject, and hurried as circumstances have made

my practice, yet in that practice I have improved. It may seem to one not conversant with American scenery and atmosphere that the tints are too vivid, and the whole scene too clear and sharply defined, particularly in the distance; but these are the peculiarities of the country, the latter quality rendering the treatment of distance peculiarly difficult, which the moist haze of an English horizon renders comparatively easy. The rude raft of newly-felled trees and the "fellers" in front are characteristic of every big river in the country; and you can scarcely traverse ten miles of any of them without seeing trees thus swept down the stream, bearing woodmen; or, sometimes, an unoccupied tenant of the wilderness, whose position on the verge of the encroaching stream has made the "monarch of the forest" liable to be swept away by the tide of this revolutionary country, very much as the kings of Europe seem to be going down the stream just now. In the midst of all this sudden and fearful political outbreak it is delightful to see old England riding securely at her anchor in the midst of the storm; and the news of that bullying Chartist bravado being so easily silenced rejoices every lover of good order, *even here*. As for myself, it was a great relief to *my* mind; for if anarchy were threatened in England, it would have been no place for me, who can only contribute to the refinements of life, and I would have sent for my girls and made out the cause here, for a time, until affairs in England suited my purposes better; and, indeed, it was a comfort to me to consider that, wherever circumstances might cast my lot (already sufficiently diversified and marked by many an anxiety), that I have in my own head and hands the means of making out a livelihood, at least. But now, thank God, I look to going home in August next, unless England should continue disturbed; but I do not think there is any dread to be entertained of that *now*, since the quiet but firm demonstration made by the middle classes and lovers of

good order on this last occasion. I wish you would write me ever so few lines to say what your and Mr. H——'s opinions are on this subject.

I will not teaze you any more with my words, for this letter is already too long, and I fear very carelessly expressed—for I am in the midst of my arduous occupation in the multiform business attendant on my "farewell" Irish Evenings, which I am giving in this city now, and, I am happy to say, to audiences highly fashionable (that is, as fashionable as audiences are here), and also numerous and applauding "to the echo." So, for the present, *adieu*—with all kind wishes.

Yours always faithfully,

SAMUEL LOVER.

Workington,

May 19th, 1849.

MY DEAR MARY,

For I cannot call you anything else, kind and valued friend, in thus writing from the place of your birth,—where *your* girlhood was spent, and which I in *my* boyhood would have given my eyes to have visited, and which, by one of those strange chances which chequer human life, I now see for the first time, when grey hairs begin to sprinkle a head that I do not think will ever be a cool one, even when quite covered with "the snowfall of Time."

I ventured to ask Mrs. Robert Thompson to let me see the garden you had so often played in, and, to my surprise, heard you had been here a fortnight since. Strange that both of us should be here, through mere chance, within so short a time. I remembered Cowper's lines about the hare—

“And as the hare, whom hounds and horns pursue,
Pants for the place from whence at first she flew.”

We have run the better part—at least, the longest—of our course, and here we have been again at the starting-point, and I know you will be glad to have kind wishes from me from this spot; and it is with the fervency and purity of prayer that I ask the Giver of all good gifts to bless your closing days with comfort and security, and that, in both our cases, our children may be blessings to us, and that they may make friendships in their youth as enduring as ours has been. I would not, however, wish that those friendships should spring in a soil so volcanic as ours had birth in; but, if it should be so, may their feelings escape, as ours have, being scorched by the lava—which, though it over-ran the first buds of our kindly feelings for each other, did not prevent the growth of some after flowers, which, though they are of *paler* hue, have still sweetness in them, without a thorn to wound either ourselves or others.

That blessings, dear Mary, be ever on you and yours is the heartfelt prayer of

Your attached friend,

SAMUEL LOVER.

To Mrs. H——.

*Garrick Club, King Street, Covent Garden,
London, Aug. 29th, 1851.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

It was kind and considerate of you to let some time elapse between the time of my terrible bereavement and your affectionate address to me. The feeling that thus prompted you will enable you to understand why I have delayed answering you—the theme was too painful to touch.

Soon after my irreparable loss I had much to write of my darling, and this *dwelling* upon my misery brought me into such a state of nervous excitement, that I began to dread the consequences, and for some time abstained from the outpouring of my sorrows. For a time I was with Fanny, at Greenfield Hall, Holywell; but after some time the too great quiet began to make me too melancholy, and I came here to London, to rouse myself into action and patient forgetfulness. To a certain degree I have succeeded, but still the recent pangs of the past vibrate with an active sensibility sometimes, as the nerves do after amputation of a limb, and I still dare not trust myself to be alone.

I shall be with Fanny soon, and, while near you, will go over some day to Chester, and talk with you of *her who is in heaven*. Her conduct throughout her illness, and in her death, was worthy of that lovely life which the Almighty permitted me for awhile to enjoy the contemplation of,—and, in His great mercy, He permitted me to afford her every earthly comfort she required, and also granted me the holy privilege of reading to her often and often those blessed words of promise, and mercy, and hope, which strengthened her faith in her last hours. HE permitted me also to receive her last look—her last sigh,—for in *my arms* my darling died.

I will speak with you, my dear and oldest friend, of this sad trial it has pleased God to visit me with when we meet, and must not venture to write more of it.

My kind regards to Mrs. Ayckbourn and Miss Lilian, of whose sympathies you assured me. Love to your dear girls.

Ever yours, dear Frederic,

SAMUEL LOVER.

Rev. Frederic Ayckbourn.

The Vine, —

March 9th, 1864.

MY DEAR HARVEY,

If your poor foolish old liver "has been and gone and got" congested, my poor foolish old lungs have become sanguinary in their intentions,—but I do not think they intend to kill me yet quite, but the doctor says I must be careful for some time, while this severe weather lasts.

The ensanguined expectoration did not continue for more than four or five days, gradually decreasing, and I am getting better every day,—but I feel I had better be quiet. I am utterly forbidden to sing, and to speak as little as possible, until the weak spot has recovered its healthy tone. So much for cause of grumbling. You have given me cause of rejoicing in telling me of my triumphs—the triumph of Irish bulls over Essex calves.

As for the songs which may suit the *reverend* lady, I must look over a catalogue to refresh my memory; for, in real truth, I begin to forget half of them, not being called upon often now to parade them, living as we do in this dullest of all dull places. *Par exemple*, if Miss B—— is so desirous to know me, why don't Mr. and Mrs. B—— perform the courtesy of a visit? It is just

like S——, where everybody seems bound in the fetters of stupidity! The life-blood of society has no genial flow in this place: it is coagulated as the blood in my lungs was, except that *it isn't worth a spit*. Bœotian stupidity, Cimmerian gloom, Karinthian churlishness—any other epithet of the same kind you can invent may be applied to this miserable place. Why do I stay here, then? you will say. Simply because the air has renovated my wife's health, and so evidently is the right thing for her, that all other convictions sink before it, and, so far from being disheartened by the disgusting discourtesy which prevails here, I have taken a twenty-one years' lease of my house, and laid out money in building an addition to it. To any one dependant on society for *filling up their time*, this place would never do; but I am so independent of society for *that*, that the churlish spirit that reigns here causes me no inconvenience, and only excites my wonder; and as my wife's delicate health would not permit her to indulge in much company-keeping, and she likes reading, and her little bit of garden in fine weather—and likes *me* into the bargain—we can do very well without *neighbours*, and depend on our friends elsewhere to come and visit us for a few days together. By the way, *you* must come, my dear Harvey, some time or other, as soon as the weather gets better—perhaps towards the end of April—we shall see, and fix about it in good time. I send you by this post my two volumes of *Legends and Stories*—presentations to my wife (as you may see by the fly-leaf), who lends them to *you*—and if you were not a great favourite of hers you could not have had them, I can tell you. You have lost two copies, you tell me. Charles Young, the tragedian, told me once that I might keep continually publishing fresh editions of the *Legends*, on the strength of his patronage alone—"For I am always buying them," says Charles, "and always lending them—and my honest friends are always never giving them back to me." These books have cer-

tainly had a great knack of getting lost. I have lost dozens of copies,—only *one* of the original copies remains with me, and that is locked up among the family archives: I dare not trust it out. The copies I send you are the only ones I now possess (Baldwin and Cradock's nice edition). Where the work is now, I don't know now—the two volumes have been knocked into one, I believe, and poorly printed. Mrs. Lover hopes you will take care of them—I *know* you will. She (Mrs. L.) also sends you her kindest regards along with mine, and we both hope that you (and I) may soon be in better health. Give our kind remembrances to your reverend daughter—best wishes for the success of the school, and tell Mrs. Pridham, moreover, I won't forget to look out for suitable songs.

And now, after this intolerably long letter, good-bye. I was glad to get a letter from *you*, therefore I think you won't be sorry for this extra-epistolary visitation from

Your old and fast friend,

SAMUEL LOVER.

William Harvey, Esq.

Sevenoaks,

— 1864.

MY DEAR MI.,

My doctor did not order any medicine, but enjoined me to be quiet—speak little—and on no account to attempt outdoor exercise until we get warm weather. When is that to be? One scarce dares venture to hope,—everywhere it is the same awful weather. In Sicily, with Etna hard at work, there is a palm depth of snow on the ground. In Algiers the very Africans are pelted with hail. What can *we* expect? To-day, here, we have sudden heavy squalls of wind laden with *snow*, and sleet, and hail—a pleasing variety. Since morning we have had some eight

or ten of these small hurricanes, whirling the snow round the house and *rocking* the trees—not with a nurse's soothing voice, but swinging the vexed branches about, and now and then snapping off some small ones,—our little lawn is covered with waifs and strays. As I write, here comes another assault from the northern hill, charging down upon us in its white uniform—like the Austrians. Well, we must depend on *our fire* to defeat the enemy. We cannot drive him back, but our fire, we hope, will prevent him doing us any harm.

After dinner.—I take up my pen to finish my scribble scrabble, and the sky, so hostile all the day, looks like offering a treaty of peace this evening. I fear it will only be an armistice after all—no solid treaty, I doubt. We must stand to our arms; I'll fight under the blanket (by way of banner), stand by my coal-scuttle, and flourish my poker.

We both send, hence, as warm love as it is possible to send in the present state of the thermometer.

I am always yours, dear Mi.,

Very fondly,

SAMUEL LOVER.

Sevenoaks,

June 15th, 1865.

MY DEAR MR. NELSON,

I was so glad to get your letter this morning, for I was almost afraid my candour might have assumed the shape of bluntness, and offended you. Candour I know you are of too pure a spirit to object to; but bluntness (if candour degenerates into it) may disturb the meekest of Christians. Now, I do not mean to say that I am a very bad man, but I am quite sure I have no virtues *to spare*, and therefore do not wish to incur the risk of

being suspected of a vice I have not, and hypocrisy is one so repugnant to any one of integrity—that is amongst the last of which I would be guilty, more particularly in *spiritual* matters—and I thought I should be guilty of hypocrisy to receive a second book from you containing spiritual advice and exhortation, and leave you to believe the influence of such books was *all* you could wish.

Touching the second book your kindness supplied, I think it more salutary than most I have seen of the same character, because *gentler* and more hopeful in its tone. It does not hold forth *everlasting* punishment—*vide* p. 178 (last half)—and at the end of that section there is a quotation from *Lalla Rookh*, showing a discreet enlightenment on the part of the compiler, for a bigoted person would not have permitted a line of Thomas Moore's (however virtuous and holy in spirit) to appear in a holy cause.

And here I must tell you a little bit of my experience among some of my early friends, who had a leaning to extreme evangelical opinions, respecting the very poem whence that quotation I allude to is made ("Paradise and the Peri"). When I upheld that poem as admirable, not only in its poetry, but in its religious tone, my friends told me that the poem was an insidious attack upon the doctrine of atonement; for, according to T. Moore, the drop of blood (shed by a warrior in defence of his native land, as you may remember in the poem) was refused at the gates of Paradise, and the tears of repentance accepted. There was something so ingeniously unjust in this, that I confess it disgusted me, and more experience in the same quarter, of dark and cruel Calvinism, gradually caused a breach between those who had lived together for years in happy and innocent boyhood, and in God-loving enjoyment. Pope speaks of "the rash dexterity of wit,"—I cannot help thinking there has been such a thing as the

rash dexterity of theology also. You see, dear friend, that thoughts upon this most important of all considerations have been part of my mental exercise from an early date—*far earlier* even than this I have spoken,—but which would take more than the compass of a letter to explain; yet you may hear yet, when we shall have, some time or other, please God, a quiet talk together.

I cannot better prove to you how conscientiously I have read the book (*Solace of an Invalid*) when I tell you that in p. 154 there has been a careless revision of the press—for *aversion*, there stands "*avertion*."

Whatever other devils I may be in danger of, I defy the *printer's* so called.

And now, to come back to *this* world and its affairs, I am sure my wife and I cannot have the pleasure of being with you on Thursday next, nor even of taking a *late* dinner with you any day—for it is imperative on me not to be out in the night air,—but I will write to you when we shall be in town, and find out what day your early dinner of two o'clock will permit us to call and find a lunch, and thus answer two purposes, like that piece of furniture Goldsmith immortalizes, as "a bed by night, a chest of drawers by day."

With the affectionate regards of my dear good wife and myself to you and yours,

Ever, dear friend,

Most sincerely yours,

Rev. Edward J. Nelson.

SAMUEL LOVER.

St. Helier's, Jersey,

March 4th, 1867.

MY DEAR —,

In a letter to my dear wife you have requested an answer to a question, to be answered by me. It is true that a custom (and a very bad one) has prevailed for some time of paying public singers for singing certain compositions in public with a view of making them popular.

Now, singers can certainly bring a composition before the public; but as to making it popular, that is quite another affair. That end is *not* achieved—and why? Because, for the sake of their fee, they are constantly singing rubbish. Now and then a song of reasonable merit gets thus a lift, and rises into circulation; but thorough popularity was never acquired for a song by the mere singing of any artist, however great, though the mere rank and file of the profession are setting up to do that feat just now. You have heard, you say, that no song can become popular unless some professed artist (or *artiste*—as they are mostly Frenchified now) *is paid to sing them*. Now, in my own experience I know that is not true, for there is no doubt that plenty of *my* songs have become popular, and I never paid a farthing to any singer in my life to dandle my breathings before the public, and make them believe “what sweet, pretty critters they war!”

In fine, advertisements in the public journals and the singing of a song in public will do a certain amount of benefit to any composition—it will produce some sale; but it is soon found out what sort of metal it is made of. If it have the right ring, it gets the mint mark; if not, the cracked article is thrown into the refuse. Public singing by paid singers I look upon as crutches for cripples. The hale walk on their own legs.

The chief operators in this *medico-musical* hospital for weak offspring are Doctor —— and that old nurse ——, who have several small assistants under them, that promise cures to the destitute in a small way ; but I think the institutions vicious in principle, and therefore weak in practice.

A public singer's chief object should be to get a good song to sing. As well might a dragoon go into the battle-field with a switch instead of a broad sword, as a singer on the platform with a song that has neither edge nor point. If a singer take the present ten guineas for poor songs, he sacrifices the future hundreds or thousands that would be the result of singing good ones.

That eminent singer —— is a living and melancholy proof of this. He was one of the first to begin the bribing barbarism—for barbarism I call it, when an artist can discard what he knows is good in his art to take up and hold up to admiration what he knows to be trash—and what is the result? When he sang good songs, he was always encored ; when he took to singing bad ones, he quitted the platform “without a hand,” as the phrase is.

But a further result took place when he was found to be always leaving the platform without any applause—he lost his engagements.

I began by answering a question which, quite unexpectedly, has led me into the length nearly of an essay.

However, I have answered your question.

Yours, dear friend, ever sincerely,

SAMUEL LOVER.

St. Helier's, Jersey,

Feb. 14th, 1868.

MY DEAR MRS. HALL,

On looking over your letter about my picture of Russell Moore, I perceive there is much which you inquire about that I neglected to notice in my answer already sent you. I suppose my illness made me stupid.

The picture was painted in Dublin. The occasion occurred thus:—Moore's mother wanted to see his grandchildren, so Moore paid a visit to Ireland with his wife and little ones. In his native city, of course, every one was "ready to eat them up," as we say in Ireland, and bestow every attention upon them possible. I was amongst the first to see and welcome them, for it was my good fortune to be a great favourite with dear old Mrs. Moore, the delightful, cheery old grandmother, and to her house I went, by invitation, the very day the interesting party arrived.

I was struck by the beauty of the boy Russell, and, *as my share* of doing homage to the bard of whom we were and are so justly proud, I proposed painting his portrait as a present to Mrs. Moore (his mother), who graciously accepted my proposal. Moore was much pleased also, and made a little present in return.

What was it?—Something that always brings sad memories with it whenever it is remembered.

The first short frock my darling Meta ever wore was a present from Tom Moore.

And where are the bright children of that bright time?—All gone! To use Moore's own beautiful lines, how little he or I then thought that—

"Dim decay

Would steal before the steps of Time,
And waste that bloom away."

—By-the-by, how full of sorrow are many of Moore's songs, though he is, by custom, considered the 'bright,' the 'sparkling,' the 'witty;' for instance :—

“When friendships decay,
And from Love's shining circle the gems drop away.”

Again—

“I sigh to think how soon that brow
In grief may lose its every ray,
And that light heart, so joyous now,
Almost forget it once was gay.”

And in that intensely melancholy song—

“Oh, banquet not in those smiling bow'rs,”

Where he invites to a garden

“Of faded flow'rs.”

How surpassingly sad are the following lines :—

“And there we shall have our feast of tears,
And many a cup in silence pour :
Our guests—the friends of former years ;
Our toasts—to lips that bloom no more.”

Then, as I have touched on this subject, what matchless melancholy is here—

“One bitter remembrance, one sorrow that throws
The bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes,
To which life nothing darker nor brighter can bring,
For which joy hath no charm and affliction no sting.”

Dear friend, I am making but sad work of this letter, perhaps because I am inclined to be a little sad myself; so I had better make an end of it.

You ask me to give you some description of Russell Moore. You know how hard, or rather how impossible, it is for words to give any notion of lineaments.

All children's faces are, to a certain extent, round; but Russell's might have been remarked for roundness even among children—nose, though *retroussé*, nicely defined about the nostril, a pretty mouth, well-marked eyebrows, and dark brown eyes of remarkable beauty, with a certain expression of archness that reminded of his father—you remember what brilliant and vivacious eyes *his* were,—in short, Russell Moore's face would have been a good model for a painter who wanted a suggestion for a little Cupid.

In my former letter I told you how restless, and troublesome, and mischievous a little monkey he was.

Of all I have said, use as little or as much as you like. I wish anything I could say were better worth quotation; in very truth, I feel myself to be very dull just now, so depressing are these repeated attacks of cold on the organs of respiration.

You know in our dear old native Ireland how every disease is called by the peasantry 'an impression of the heart,' and I really think that is the very disease I've got—that is, if I have any heart left at all.

How kindly you speak, in your letter, of my wife and myself—but not more kindly than we think of you.

Ever yours most sincerely,

SAMUEL LOVER.

St. Heliers, Jersey, .

March 8th, 1868.

MY DEAR —,

So you want to turn me into a reviewer at the end of my days. Well, there's nothing I won't do for you, so send me the MSS., and I will sharpen my critical carving-knife in the mean time, as you solicit me not to spare.

Badinage apart, I will tell you sincerely what I think of the poems, and am glad to find that, in these dreadfully prosaic days and utilitarian times, poetic visions are indulged in by some few still.

Noble deeds, too, still are done in this world, bad as it is in many ways—witness the heroism of our Vice-Consul at St. Sebastian. A fine article on the subject in the *Daily Telegraph* of the 5th; see it if you can.

You know how utterly at variance my political creed is with that of *Disraeli*, yet I could not help rejoicing at his recent triumph—my sympathy with a man of letters was stronger than my political bias.

That mere talent in this aristocratic country should win the highest prize an Englishman *can* win, was a delightful sensation to me, and, though I never liked the man, in very truth “I wish him good luck with his honour.”

But, to adopt the words of Lord Lytton, “What will he do with it?” If a good use is not made of it, he cannot wear the garland for long. I am sorry to hear dear mamma's cough is so bad at times—I can sympathize with her. I am better than I was, but this last attack of cold has been a thoroughly severe one, influencing more than the chest. My hearing has suffered seriously; just now I am obliged to have the assistance of an ear trumpet. Think of that, my beauty!—there's a state for your old

Lover to be in!—no more tender whisperings! Imagine sweet confessions to be made through an ear trumpet! Well, away with secresy and squeamishness—speak out! I don't care who knows you're fond of me!! Pray thank Dr. S—— for me; it was a kind thought of his to offer me the loan of my old friend Dr. Petrie's book of *Irish Melodies*, but I have seen it. Many an Irish melody Petrie and I have discovered at the fountain head together, in our pleasant pictorial rambles through Ireland. We were attached friends and constant companions; his death was an event to be felt by me. How many dear friends I have lost lately! your own dear father among them. The shot is flying fast and thick among the front companies; it makes one think of that fine couplet of Longfellow's—

“Hearts, like muffled drums, are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.”

Well, though I have written a few sad lines in the end of this letter, you may see by the first part of it that I am not down-hearted, and, though I am amongst the *ci-devants*—that is one of the front company—still I march cheerfully and cry, “Heads up, soldiers!” With love to mamma and yourself, dearest,

Yours very fondly,

SAMUEL LOVER.

St. Heliers,
April 9th, 1868.

DEAR HENRY,

In the London *Daily Telegraph* of yesterday, some lines of mine appear [*The Lay of the Irish Minstrel*], which I think you will like. They are sufficiently complimentary to Royalty, but the second stanza is proof sufficient that my muse is not servile, though I partake of the favour of my Queen. I hope you will be able to see the Princess of Wales—they say she is very handsome and sweet-looking. These last words show you that I have never seen her; indeed, so far have I been for many years from all gorgeous gatherings, that I have not looked upon the Queen since I saw her, a young maiden, open her first Parliament—that was, indeed, a most interesting occasion. Lord Brougham it was who gave me a Lord Chamberlain's ticket, and in his (the Lord Chamberlain's) gallery I saw the Queen and the grand *cortège*, in splendid procession, pass by within three feet of us. The sweet young girl entering upon the cares of sovereignty was a most touching sight. I think there were more tears than smiles upon all who blessed her as she passed, so young, and to undertake such heavy cares. Nobly and truthfully has she done her duty in every relation of her life, and has even redeemed Royalty from the *mauvais odcur* into which it had fallen in some previous reigns.

INDEX.

INDEX.

A.

Absenteeism, 33, 53

Academy, Royal Hibernian, founded in 1803, 52 ; its influence on Irish Art, 127

Addison, his Irish ballad, 94

Alabama, the River, Lover's song on it, 281

America, its climate—heat, transitions, &c., 252 ; winter in—skating, sleighing, &c., 270, 271 ; inns, roads, stage-coaching, vegetation, &c., 277, 280

American Humour, specimens of, 444

American Society, 259, 274, 282

Anglesea, Marquis of, story of, 82

"*Anne of Swansea*," the Novelist, sister of Mrs. Siddons, 184

Atlantic Telegraph, 451

B.

Backwoodsman, 417

Bagenal, Beauchamp, his mad adventures, 77

Balfe, M. W., the Composer, 50 ; anecdote of, 125

Banim, John and Michael, romances of the Irish peasantry—the passionate side of the peasant, 190 ; their political and social object, 192 ; Michael's share in the *O'Hara Tales*, 193 ; *The Conformist* John's *chef d'œuvre*, 194—John Banim's lyrics, 331

- Bannister*, John, his Entertainment, 243
- Bards*, the Irish, 49 ; first song-writers and composers, 95 ; their model peasant love-song, 97 ; their bacchanalians, 98 ; favourites of the Celtic nations, high appointments, &c., 356 ; their patriotism and persecution, 358 ; modern Irish bards, Jacobites, &c., 96
- Barrett*, George, Landscape Painter, 50
- Barrington*, Sir Jonah, 76
- Barry*, the Painter, 50
- Beauford*, his Essay on the Irish Harp, 357
- Bentley's Miscellany*, Lover's connection with, 226
- Béranger*, as a national songster, 238 ; as a song-writer, 241
- Beresford*, John Claudius, his little Inquisition, 5
- Berlioz*, Hector, Paganini's kindness to, 134
- Berwick*, Duke of, his repartee, 365
- Bickerstaff*, Dramatist, 182
- Blacker*, Col., his song, 100
- Boston*, U.S., its English aspect, 255 ; frigid audiences, effect of the climate, &c., 258, 259
- Brennan*, Dr., his satire, 120
- Brigade*, the Irish, its origin, 362 ; its exile, and sympathy with France, 363 ; its share in the victory of Fontenoy, 364 ; its conduct at the siege of Cremona, 364 ; repartee of the Duke of Berwick, 365 ; anecdote of, 366 ; the Yellow Domino, 367 ; its loss to England, 369
- Brophy*, the Dentist, his comic stories, 82
- Bucks* of Ireland, their character and varieties—Mohawks, Pinkindindies, &c., 26, 27
- Buck English* and *Buck Sheehey*, 27
- Buckthorn*, Jonathan, Editor of the *Irish Horn Book*, 128
- Bulls and Blunders*, specimens of, 376
- Bunting*, his Collection of Irish Airs, 107, 233
- Burns*, Robert, as a national songster, 239, 241
- Burns Festival*, 336
- Burschenschaft*, Lever's club in Dublin, 122
- Bushe*, Chief Justice, a joke of, 121
- Butler*, Architect and Caricaturist, 82
- Byron*, Lord, best describer of Niagara, 297

C.

- Calanan*, his songs, 102, 331
Cambrensis, Giraldus, his testimony to Irish music, 356
Cambridge, U.S., its literati, 257
Campbell, Thomas, his disputed claim to *The Exile of Erin*, 335
Campkin, Mr., his sketch of Lover, 42 ; comparison of music and painting, 146
Canada, its old French and Indian settlements, 305, 306 ; the French peasants and seigneurs, 307
Caradoc, his testimony to Irish music, 356
Carey, Thomas, Burlesque Writer, 215
Carleton, William, the greatest painter of the peasant, 195 ; the Prose Burns of Ireland, 196 ; his *Traits and Stories*, 197 ; his character painting, 197 ; *Fardarougha*, his greatest effort, 198 ; his other works, 199, 200
Carolan, the last true Bard of Ireland, 96 ; his love-songs, 97 ; his bacchanalians, 98 ; his cultivation and his blindness, 361
Carolinians, their festive spirit, 275
Catholic Gentry, their intensity, 159 ; their prostration, 161
Chambers, Sir W., his Irish architecture, 48
Cherry, Andrew, his *Tom Moody*, 330
Clay, Henry, compliment to Lover, 286
Cloncurry, Lord, eulogium on Irish society, 79
Clubs of Dublin—the Five-bottle, 75 ; Abduction Clubs, 78 ; the Burschenschaft, 122 ; the Dublin Glee Club, 123
Collegians, *The*, Griffin's masterpiece, 187
Colman, George, his disputed claim to *Savourneen Deelish*, 334
Comerford, Ireland's best miniature painter, 51, 58
Connelan, a prolific Bard, 96
Cooke, Thomas, Violinist and Composer, 124
Cooley, Architect of the Dublin Royal Exchange, 48
Cork, Countess of, 169
Craig, Isa, her prize poem, 337
Creole Life, its lights and shadows, 285
Crockett, Col., the Kentuckian, 292
Croker, Crofton, his Irish songs, 105
Croker, John Wilson, his feud with Lady Morgan—Familiar Epistles,

- Croly*, Dr., his romances, 157 ; his poetry, 332
Cronelly, Mr., his dissertation on *The Exile of Erin*, 336
Curran, J. P., his witticism on Beresford, 5 ; on a group of mediocrities, 119

D

- Danby*, the Painter, 51
Dante, on the Irish Harp, 357
Davis, Thomas, his songs, 102, 331
Dempsey, Charles, Cahir na Coppel, 371
Dermody, the Poet, 94
Detroit and its Signs, 449
Dibdin, Charles, as a song-writer, 239 ; as a comic lecturer, 243
Downing, Mrs., her songs, 332
Drennan, Dr., his songs, 101, 108
Dublin, Lover's birth-place, 1 ; its population and their humour, 21 ; its history for seventy years, 21, 28, 30, 32 ; its social extravagancies, 76 ; its elegant society, 79 ; its later ameliorations, 81 ; its eccentric characters, 83
Dublin Carmen, *Porters*, &c., 396
Dublin Fishwoman, 384
Dublin Populace, their humour, 20
Dublin University Magazine, Lover's connection with its outset, 226
Dufferin, Lady, her *Emigrant's Lament*, 332
Duffy, Gavan, his Book of Lyrics, and his own songs, 95, 103

E.

- Edgeworth*, Miss, earliest and least national of Irish novelists, 159 ; her defects and merits, 165, 166 ; *Ormond* her best Irish story, 166 ; her English tales, 167 ; her compliment to Lover, 208 ; her verses, 330
Ellis, Hercules, account of *The Exile of Erin*, 335
Etching, Lover's employment of, 130, 223

F.

- Fardarougha*, Carleton's greatest story, 198
Father Prout (Francis Mahoney), 83, 226, 228, 339, 493

Ferguson, Dr., his ballads, 95
Fighting Fitzgerald, 27
Fire-Eaters, the, 77
First Love, its uses, 118
Fitzpatrick, Mr., the Irish Biographer, 172
Fogs of the New England coast, 308
Foley, the Sculptor, 48
Fontenoy, Battle of, 364
Foote, Samuel, his Tea-parties, 242
Fordun, John de, on Irish Music, 356
French Character, effect of cold on, 307
French Settlements in America, 284, 305

G.

Gandon, the Architect, &c., 48
Goldsmith, Oliver, his ballads, 94; epitaph on Parnell, 330; notice of Carolan, 360
Grattan, Colley, his romances, 157
Griffin, Gerald, his songs, 102; romance of his life, 181; his *Gisippus*, 183; his sphere the middle classes, 185; his first tales, *Holland Tide*, 185; *Tales of the Munster Festivals*, their characteristics, 186; *The Collegians*, his masterpiece, 187; his other Works, 190; his Drama, *The Noyades*—dramatic rendering of his Stories—*The Robber's Wife*, *Love's Sacrifice*, *The Colleen Bawn*, &c., 190.
Grillon's, complimentary dinner to Lover, at, 226

H.

Hackett, the American Comedian, 260, 262
Handy Andy, Lover's best work, 206
Hardiman, his collection of Gaelic poetry, 93, 96
Harrison, Mr., the Vocalist, 326
Haydn, his opinion of melody, 232
Hayes, Angelo, Painter, 51
Hayes, Catherine, Vocalist, 50
Hayes, Edward, Book of Irish Lyrics, 95

- Hepstal*, Lieutenant, the "Walking Gallows," 6
Herbert, Miss, her verses, 332
Herbert, Mr., his "Irish Varieties," 51
Higgins, the sham Squire, 78
Hime, the Vocalist, 325
Hogan, the Sculptor, 48
Hotel Comforts (1846), 431
Hudson, the Irish Comedian, 325
Hull, Commodore, anecdote of, 425

I.

- Indian Settlements*, 306
Indian Summer, Lover's song, 262
Irish Art, its modern origin—more imperial than national, 46, 47 ;
 Irish architecture not native, 47 ; Irish sculptors migratory,
 48 ; Irish music originating with the bards, 49 ; no modern great
 productions, 49 ; Irish painters numerous in the past century,
 50 ; modern ones, 51 ; miniature painters, 51
Irish Ballads, their early writers, Parnell and Goldsmith, 94 ; their
 later and truer authors, Griffin, M'Ghee, Ferguson, &c., 95
Irish Dramatists, 182
Irish Fiction, its modern date and its two divisions, romantic and
 national, 156 ; romantic writers, 157 ; Miss Edgeworth the
 earliest novelist, 159 ; Lady Morgan the earliest of the
 national school of fiction, 160 ; Banim, Carleton, and Griffin
 originators of its peasant stories, 162 ; painters of the graver
 aspects of the peasant—Lover and other painters of the gayer,
 162 ; peculiarities of Irish fiction, 163 ; Miss Edgeworth as a
 novelist, her merits and defects, 165 ; *Ormond* her best
 tale—her English stories, 167 ; Lady Morgan, her ardour
 and excess, 168 ; *O'Donnell* and *Florence Macarthy* her
 best Stories, 169 ; their character painting, 170 ; her political
 warfare, 171 ; and with J. W. Croker, 172 ; her eventual compen-
 sation—Lever a third and superior novelist, 173 ; two classes
 of stories : pictures of the comic romance of Ireland, *Charles*
O'Malley, &c., 174 ; pictures of its transitional social condi-
 tion, *Knight of Gwynne*, &c., 175 ; their characteristics, 176 ;

Maturin's one Novel, 177 ; Griffin the painter of the middle classes, 185 ; the *Tales of the Munster Festivals*, their great merits, 186 ; *The Collegians* their crowning effort, 187 ; its characteristics, 188, 189 ; Banim and the romances of the peasantry, 190 ; his intensity and pathos—the great effect of the *O'Hara Tales*, 191 ; their political and social objects, 192 ; misery of the Irish peasantry, 193 ; Michael Banim's share in the stories, 194 ; *The Conformist* John's ablest work, 194 ; William Carleton, the greatest painter of the peasant, his universal power, 195 ; his *Traits and Stories*, 197 ; character painting in other works, 197 ; *Fardarougha* his great triumph, 198 ; characteristics of other tales, 199 ; Lover's peasant stories, entirely humorous, 201 ; defensive of the peasant character—his other qualities, 202 ; his feeling transferred to his poetry, 203 ; distinctions of his humour in verse and prose, 203 ; his *Legends and Stories*, their fairy illustration, 205 ; his novels—*Rory O'More*, its hero—the ideal of the peasant, 206 ; *Handy Andy*, Lover's triumph, 207 ; its character painting, 207 ; and incidents, 208

Irish Harp, the, its history, 357 ; construction and general use, 358 ; quartered in the arms of England by Henry VIII., 359

Irish Horn Book, the, satire on the Tithe System, illustrated by Lover, 128

Irish Life in the past century, unique in modern history, 74 ; its festivity and pugnacity, 75 ; its eccentricity, savagery, and refinement, 76, 78, 80

Irish Music, its history, 355 ; the source of Scotch and Welsh, 356, 357 ; popular with Queen Elizabeth, 359 ; cause of its plaintive character, 233 ; serious and comic, entirely national, 234

Irish Songs, their history and nationality, 93 ; paucity of early Irish ballads, 94 ; their modern origin and merit, 94 ; Irish songs all national, 95 ; the Gaelic, their abundance, 95 ; the peasant love-song, 97 ; the bacchanalian, 98 ; the Jacobite and Orange songs, 99, 100 ; the Volunteer and the Rebellion lyrics, 101 ; Moore's *Melodies*, and modern national songs, 101 ; comic songs of Ireland, 104 ; their English counterfeits, 105 ; Lover's comic love-songs of two classes, the humorous and tender, 107 ; their prompter, Lady Morgan—their com-

mencement, *Rory O'More*, 107 ; the great success of words and music, 108 ; followed by others of a like character, 109

Irish Stage, 184

"*It's mighty improvin'*," 394

J.

Ferrolld, Douglas, his witticisms, 228

Fervas, the Painter, friend of Pope, 50

Johnson, Francis, the Architect, 52

Johnstone, the Comedian, 334

Jones, the Sculptor and Vocalist, 82

Judge's Cave, the, anecdote of, 264

K.

Kelly, Michael, Composer and Vocalist, 49

Kentuckian, his character and humour, 292

Knight of Gwynne, Lever's best novel, 175

L.

Lacey, Rophino, Composer and Vocalist, 124

Lakes, of America, visit to, 312

Lake of a Thousand Islands, 300

Lamb, Charles, his joke on Elliston, 183

Laurel Hill, its cemetery, 422

Lee, Alexander, the Composer, 124

Lefanus, family of, 81

Lever, Charles, his clubs in Dublin, 122 ; his novels of two classes, the effervescent and observant: *Charles O'Malley*, &c., 174 ; *Knight of Gwynne*, &c., 175 ; his military lyrics, 103

Lewes, Lee, his Entertainment, 243

Libretto-Writer, his requirements, 326

Lilliburlero, Lord Wharton's song, 100

Liston, the Comedian, 215

London Society, 73, 144, 213

London Stage, in 1823, 183

Longfellow, his home at Cambridge, U.S., 257

Lover, Samuel, his birth and family, 1 ; a delicate child with a good mother, 2, 3 ; martial law witnessed in his childhood, 4—7 ; early development of his musical taste, 9 ; failure of health and visit to Wicklow, 11 ; its influence on the coming artist, 13 ; first impressions of the peasantry, 14 ; recovered health and return to Dublin, 17 ; strength and gaiety of his boyhood, 18 ; the growing humourist and the Dublin populace, 20 ; begins life as a stockbroker, 34 ; stirring of his various faculties, 36 ; feud with his father, 37 ; his quitting home to become a painter, 38 ; his want of qualification, &c., 40 ; his three years' preparation and commencement as a marine painter, 53 ; attractions of water-colour, 54 ; he gradually turns to miniature, 55 ; his development under the influence of Comerford, 62 ; his *début* in literature with the story of *The Gridiron*, 65 ; his *début* as a song-writer at the Moore banquet, 66, 67 ; becomes a favourite in society, 70 ; his social appetite and talents, 71, 72 ; commences comic love-songs with *Rory O'More*, 107 ; its great success, words and music, 108 ; object of his songs, 92, 106 ; their two classes, tender and humorous, 107 ; his marriage, 117 ; his club life in Dublin, 123 ; his first drama, 126 ; becomes secretary of the Hibernian Academy, 126 ; his *Tales and Legends*, first series, 130 ; the Paganini miniature, 131 ; scene with Paganini, 132 ; success of the picture in London, 140 ; its merits, 141 ; removal to London, 142 ; second series of his *Tales and Legends*, 144 ; his sentimental songs introduced by Mdme. Vestris, 146 ; begins novel-writing with *Rory O'More*, 156 ; reception in London society, 212 ; conversational talent, 214 ; his dramas for Mdme. Vestris, 215 ; his other dramas for Power, 216 ; his miniature painting in London, 219, 221 ; other pictures, 223 ; his etching—weakened eyesight and abandonment of painting, 224 ; his connection with *Bentley's Miscellany*, 226 ; his social gatherings, 227 ; his labours and merits as a composer, 231, 232 ; his merits as a song-writer, 241 ; his *début* as an Entertainer, 245 ; provincial tour, 246 ; voyage to America, 251 ; reception at New York and audience at Boston, &c., 253, 258 ; death of Mrs. Lover, 265 ; Washington

and its Capitol, 267 ; arrival of winter, skating and sleighing, 269, 272 ; departure for the South, Charleston, Savannah, &c., 279 ; Mobile and New Orleans, 281 ; ascent of the Mississippi, 287 ; return to New York and visit to Canada, 295 ; Niagara, 296 ; the " Lake of a Thousand Islands," 300 ; descent of the rapids, 303 ; sail down the St. Lawrence, 305 ; visit to New England—its fogs, land and marine, 308 ; New York during the winter, 310 ; visit to the Great Lakes, 312 ; return to Niagara and to England, 317 ; new Entertainment, 320 ; death of his daughter and his second marriage, 321 ; return to private life and to painting, 321 ; return to the drama, 325 ; editor of a *Book of Irish Lyrics*, 328 ; the Burns Festival and his burlesque, *Rival Rhymes*, 336, 338 ; the Volunteer movement and his songs, 341 ; failure of his health, 343 ; retreat to Jersey, 343 ; his religious feeling and resignation, 345 ; his last illness and death, 347.

Lyric, its poetic standard, 148

Lyric Drama, its constituents, 231, 327

Lyrics of Ireland, edited by Lover, 328

Lysaght, Edward, his songs, 100, 104

M.

Macarthy, D., his ballads, 95

Macdowell, the Sculptor, 48

MacLise, D., his portrait of Lover in *Fraser's Magazine*, 211

Macready, W. C., his production of Griffin's *Gisippus*, 183, 184

M'Ghee, D'Arcy, his ballads, 95

Maginn, Dr., notice of Lover in *Blackwood's Magazine*, 211

Malibran, the Singer, her greeting to Lover, 144

Mangan, Clarence, the Lyrical, 103, 104

Marriage, Lover's first, 117 ; his second, 321

Mathews, Charles, his " At Homes," 243

Maturin, Charles, his eccentricities, 84 ; his retort on a practical joker, 85 ; his romances, 157 ; his one novel, 177

Melody, the soul of music, 231 ; one of the vital elements of opera, as also of harmony, 232

Memphis, the ancient and modern, 290

- Miniature*—Irish miniature painters, 51 ; its merits as compared with photography, 55 ; and with oil portraits, 56 ; its peculiar function, an agent of the affections, 56 ; its popularity in Ireland, 57 ; its private life, 225.
- Military Aggression*, 7
- Mississippi*, its majesty, 287 ; its monotony, 287 ; an unsuspected revolutionist, 289 ; its variety of climate, 289 ; its inundations, 290
- Moore*, Thomas, his attractiveness to Lover, 10 ; his estimate by the latter, 11 ; his *Melodies* an epoch in Irish song, 101 ; his merits as a song-writer, 240, 241
- Moore*, Russell, son of the poet, Lover's portrait of him, 222
- Moore Banquet*, the, 66
- Morgan*, Lady, her comment on Lover's feud with his father, 45 ; her prompting his comic song-writing, 107 ; the earliest national tale-writer, 160 ; contrast to Miss Edgeworth, 167 ; her power and her defects, 168 ; *O'Donnell* and *Florence M'Carthy*, her best works, 169 ; her character painting, 170 ; her political warfare, 171 ; her chief assailant, Croker, 172 ; her eventual compensation, and joke on Croker, 173 ; the first adapter of Irish melodies, 239 ; her claim to *Savourneen Deelish*, 334
- Mori*, the Violinist, his remark on Paganini, 135
- Mulready*, the Irish Wilkie, 51
- Murat*, Achille, eulogy on the Carolinians, 275

N.

- National Character*, Irish, its peculiarities, 158 ; distinction from German, Spanish, French, &c., 158
- National Opera*, 326
- Nationality*, what constitutes it, 330
- Negroes*, in America, 276, 277
- New England*, its character—reserve the effect of climate, 259 ; its accent, its origin, 256 ; its humour, its qualities, 260
- New Orleans*, its origin and aspect, 281 ; its gaiety, 282 ; its foundation—a city on a raft, 283
- New Year's Day* in New York, 310, 427
- New York*, 253 ; its novel aspect, hotels, mosquitoes, 255 ; New

- Year's Day in—sleighbing, 310 ; social incidents, public sympathy, 311
Niagara, difficulty of describing it, 295 ; Lover's impression of it, 296 ; obstacles to painting it, 297 ; contrast of its rapids and its plunge, 297 ; Byron its best describer, 297
Nicol, the Irish peasant painter, 51

O.

- O'Hanlon*, Redmond, the Irish "Claude Duval," 372
O'Hara Tales, the great impression they produced, 191 ; their twofold object, political and social, 192
O'Hara, Kane, author of *Midas*, 182, 215
O'Leary, his songs, 332
O'Neil, the Artist, 51
O'Neil, Tyrone, 371
O'Sullivan, Owen Roe, the Bard, 96
Oil-Colour and Water-Colour, their contrast, 323
Orr, James, his songs, 101
Opera, its character and origin, 326, 327
Outlaws and Exiles, 370
Owenson, the Actor, 334

P.

- Paddy and the Bear*, 387
Paddy at Sea, 400
Paganini, his visit to Dublin, 130 ; Lover's portrait of him his ablest work, 131 ; his scene with him, 132 ; slanders on him, 134 ; kindness to Hector Berlioz, 134 ; his devotion to his son, 135 ; eulogium on him by Mori, 135 ; caricatures of him in London, 138 ; Lover's seizure of his expression, 140 ; merits of the portrait, 141
Painting, Lover's earliest developed faculty, 13 ; adopted as his pursuit, 38 ; preparation for, 43 ; his marine painting, 53 ; advantages of Irish skies, 54 ; his miniature painting, 55 ; his style influenced by Comerford, 58 ; his progress, 61 ; his Paganini portrait, 62 ; his London pictures, 220—222 ; his

- abandonment of painting, 224 ; his return to it, 322 ; his oil paintings, 323
- Painting and Music*, their contrast, 146
- Patrick*, St., and the Serpent, 380
- Peasant*, the Irish, Lover's first acquaintance with him, 14 ; caricatured in English songs, 105 ; his portrait in *Rory O'More*, 107 ; the great depository of the national character, 161 ; his vindicators, 162 ; Lover, his gayer advocate, 163
- Planché*, Mr., 328
- Plymouth Rock*, U.S., its preservation, 257
- Post-boy*, the Irish, 391
- Power*, Tyrone, the Comedian, his merits, his literary talent, 217 ; his retort on Charles Kean, 219
- Protestant Gentry*, their conviviality, 159
- Pyne*, Miss, the Singer, 326

Q.

- Quebec*, its neighbourhood, 306
- Queen of the Thousand Islands*, 301

R.

- Rapparees*, anecdote of, 374
- Red-man of America*, 315
- Rejected Addresses*, 337
- Reminiscences of Childhood*, Lover's, 3
- Reynolds*, G. N., his songs, 101 ; his claim to the *Exile of Erin*, 336
- Rival Rhymes*, Lover's burlesque, 338
- Roberts*, David, the Painter, 221
- Rooke*, the Composer, 50
- Rory O'More*, Lover's song, its purpose, 107 ; prompted by Lady Morgan, 107 ; its great success, 108 ; his novel, 206 ; his drama, 216
- Ross*, Sir W., his miniatures, 137
- Rossini*, his legacy, 232
- Rural Life* in Wicklow, 14

S.

- Salem*, U.S., its frigid audiences, 259
Sam Slick, the modern Yankee Pedlar, 260
Sault St. Marie, scenery of, 314
Saxe, Marshal, story of, 365
Scott, Sir Walter, anecdote of his memory, 121
Shakspeare, his use of an Irish song, 360
Shears, the Brothers, their songs, 101
Shee, Sir Martin Archer, his play of *Alasco*, 182
Sheridan, R. B., his song, 330
Sheil, Richard, his plays and recitations, 83
Simmons, B., the Song-writer, 102
Smith, Sydney, his greeting to Lover, 145
Smythe, Edward, the Irish sculptor, 48
Society, Lover a favourite of, in Ireland, 70; in England, 72, 212; in New Orleans, 283
Songs, their place in history—the peasant and the social, 89; their character and uses, 90; their variety, 90; object of Lover's, 91
Songs of the Superstitions, 154
Song-writer, National, his antiquity and history, 236; his great exemplars, 238; each an adapter of words to music, 238; the mechanism of song-writing, 240; its great proficient, 240
Stevens, G. A., his Lecture on Heads, 243
Stevenson, Sir John, 49, 123
Stiles, Dr., of Yale College, U.S., 264
St. Lawrence, the River, its source and human history, 302
Stuart, "American," 57
Swift, Dean, 33, 329

T.

- Tickell*, his *Colin and Lucy*, 94
Tighe, Mrs., 94
Thalberg, the Pianist, his portrait, &c., 221
Thorburn, the Miniature-painter, his merits, 137
Trenton Falls, U.S., 308
Trinity College (Dublin) Students, 24

V.

- Victoria*, the Princess, her proposed miniature by Lover, 142
Vestris, Madame, Lover's musical patron, 146 ; his dramas for, 215
Volunteers, the London Irish—Lover's joining them, 341 ; his songs for, 342

W.

- Walker*, Dr., Irish music, 233
Wallace, Vincent, the Composer, 50
Waller, Dr., his Irish songs, 332
Walsh, Edward, his Irish songs, 332
Warburton and Walsh, their History of Dublin, 49
Washington, City of, 266
Western Whig, the, 435
Wicklow, County of, Lover's visit to in boyhood, 12
Wilkie, David, criticism on Lover's miniature, 141
Williams, Dalton, his ballad, 95
Willis, N. P., the American Poet, 266, 297
Whalley, Buck, 76
Wharton, Lord, his *Lilliburlero*, 100
White Boys, their Blacksmith, 373
Wolfe, General, anecdote of, 121
Wood and its Uses, 440

Y.

- Yankee Pedlar*, 261
Yankee Skipper, story of, 309
Yellow Domino, story of, 367
Young, Charles, Lover's "Special Public," 209

711/5

